Sylvia Woods  
Owner, Sylvia’s Restaurant

Clarence G. Robinson, MD  
Physician

Marian Wright Edelman  
Founder, Children’s Defense Fund

Sheila Evans-Tranum  
Assoc. Commissioner of Education

Mike Jarvis  
St. John’s Basketball Coach

Beverly Withers  
Metropolitan Opera Singer

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MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN: CHILDREN’S ADVOCATE

By POLA ROSEN, E.D.D.

Growing up in a family of 12 foster children tended to by her nurturing mother and minister father, Marian had to care about children. Her role as child advocate par excellence for the past 25 years has finally culminated in the landmark comprehensive legislation Leave No Child Behind. Your senators are behind it as are 80 House co-sponsors. There is still much work to be done before passage. The bill focuses on childcare and healthcare. “There are 12 million children living in poverty and 80 percent live with working parents that have no child care. There is no reason for that in the richest nation in the world,” Wright averts forcefully. She adds, “Bush is using words but not putting the dollars behind the words.”

The Children’s Defense Fund, which Edelman founded and runs in Washington D.C., has several branches in key cities that concentrate on state and local work, including lobbying for new laws and helping to implement those that have passed. Edelman was attracted to legal work after being part of the civil rights movement in the South. When she saw the great need of the poor people she “followed the need and decided she could help best by becoming an attorney.” After Yale law school, she went to Mississippi as a civil rights lawyer interested in school desegregation, Head Start and the broader social and economic needs of the community. In the public arena, Edelman soon realized that passing a law was one step, making the law work was another, and that “all adults have to stand up and speak for children who have no voice.” In that process, they affirm the struggle for social justice and enable the children to stand up for their own rights as well. “We adults must leave no child behind.”

In discussing difficulties in her life, Edelman cited the balance between work and family. Her own family in the South stressed that she could be and do whatever she wanted. Russian history beckoned but the pivotal point was the civil rights movement, which gave her an outlet for her anger.

Her mentors were those who fought for social justice: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Dr. Benjamin Mayes, former President of Morehouse College.

Edelman grew up with the clarity and cohesiveness of the family and community in the South. Religion was a strong force and the belief that “every child is sacred.” That has been her credo and inspiration for her life’s work.

Sylvia Woods:
THE QUEEN OF SOUL FOOD

By MARY LENA MANTAS

Growing up as an only child in Hemingway, South Carolina, Sylvia Woods, owner of the renowned Sylvia’s restaurant in Harlem, would break candy into several pieces and give it to the neighborhood children in exchange for playing with her. Her childhood actions indicate the “play” and “giving” that the restaurant possesses those qualities that later helped her pave the way to success: determination, business orientation and adoration for good company.

“I enjoy people,” says Sylvia. “I try to get around to as many customers as I can...I love to say ‘meet, greet and let’s eat!’”

In August of 1962 Sylvia put her charismatic personality to the test and purchased the restauranteur, which then was only a small luncheonette, from her own boss. Fifty years later, Sylvia’s has become the landmark of 126th St. and Lenox Avenue and the one place where everyone knows they can get a taste of authentic Southern Soul food. The restaurant also serves to remind the community’s residents that hard work, determination and love of family can succeed.

“I want the world to know that I am grateful,” said the 79-year-old, who continues to play an active role in the restaurant, carefully overseeing every activity and greeting customers, often by their first names. “I would not change anything—the good and the ugly. All of it was a part of my success.”

And, success was not easy to attain for this woman, who was raised by two widows, her mother and grandmother. “My mother never had an education, but she owned a farm and was a midwife...the men just weren’t there,” says Sylvia. Yet, the women of the family, whom she describes as “too strong” taught her perseverance, determination, but most of all, the power of love.

“My mother said, ‘Freely give and freely you will receive, but never give all of yourself.’”

Sylvia gave as much as she could. The doors to her five room apartment on 131st St. in Harlem, where she and her husband Herbert, her children and their four children after moving to New York from South Carolina, were always open to family members and friends who were new to the City.

“That apartment was the underground railroad for everyone that was coming up,” she said.

A few blocks away from the “underground railroad” Sylvia has now established a soul food empire; but in 1962, she could not even consider the possibility of her decision. In order to purchase the luncheonette, she had to ask her mother to mortgage her family farm.

Fearing that her business might fail, she asked with trepidation. Her mother agreed immediately and gave her $18,000 (in 1962). Sylvia became the owner of her own company, far from the cotton fields of South Carolina.

“The Havana Special [an express train] brought me [to New York], but the cotton field drove me out,” she said. “I hated picking cotton with a passion.”

She loves cooking, however, especially homemade food based on the recipes used by her mother and grandmother. Her food can now be purchased at most supermarkets, in containers and bottles packed in her plant in New Jersey. New customers can get a taste of her cuisine in her franchises in Kennedy Airport, New York and Atlanta.

“I look back and wonder how it happened. I am truly amazed at myself, my strength and my courage.”

Over the years, Sylvia enjoyed the support and help of family, especially that of her husband, who passed away recently. Today she is surrounded by her four children and 18 grandchildren, most of whom began working in the restaurant in their early teens. At a small corner in the restaurant, one will find a small round table where members of the Woods family, most of whom retain grandma’s sense of business, often gather. And, according to her granddaughter, Tremiessa Woods, that is where Sylvia sits “in the middle”

“That’s where she educates us,” said Tremiessa. “Give time, time, time she often tells us.”

Yet, her grandchildren are not the only ones who benefit from this extraordinary woman’s wisdom. Students from local schools, who often visit Sylvia’s, have the opportunity to meet Sylvia, who usually sits with them and advises: “You have to work hard, respect your parents, and give love. Be the best you can be, do well or don’t do it at all. If you don’t enjoy what you are doing you won’t do it well.”

Sylvia Woods

Sheila Evans- Tranumn: Associate Commissioner of Education

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

An interview with Sheila Evans-Tranumn, Associate Commissioner for the New York State Education Department and a New Yorker with solid roots in the public school system, could not be more timely. The big word in her challenging professional life is “accountability.” Ever the “A” word Mayor Mike Bloomberg was invoking in his annual address on the state of the city on January 30, “We must have mayoral accountability in education,” he said, adding that his interest is “not about who’s in charge but is about accountability in education.” He’s all for “more opportunities for parents to participate in our educational system,” but he doesn’t think a central board or the continuing system of local school boards is the answer. The Commissioner, charged with statewide responsibility for “School Accountability” across the board—from schools performing way above standard to those “furthest from the standard”—says her first priority is to ensure that all children improve by holding all adults involved accountable for educational plans “accountable.”

Though Ms. Evans-Tranumn points out that the State Commissioner and Regents have yet to issue a policy statement regarding the Mayor’s criticisms, she does indicate that the weight of those who are accountable for student performance, as measured by exams mandated at the federal level, has already made a difference in the city for the poorest performing schools. She is proud to point out in talks around the country that New York State annually takes 18 schools off its probationary list, 12 of them in the city. She wants to keep the momentum going and of assure succeed even more. What’s the trick? There is none, only hard work under a program called “extended time” where teachers work 15% longer (for pay) and cover more ground, proving that students can indeed learn, even under dire conditions. The results grew from the “privatization” initiative, which she credits with moving accountability to the forefront.

When the for-profits came along and said, we can do the job and you can hold us accountable, the results, she sensed the challenge and model the public for schools here and nationwide.

The Commissioner Tranumn is clear, however, about separating private schools from the privatization of public schools, a movement that in some ways compromises the institutions of charter schools. In response to the Mayor’s general declaration that disruptive children must be removed from the schools, she says that, indeed, “The youngest do need to be held accountable, but she adds that some need only suspension while others can be trained in a rigorous academic program. The challenge is not particularly here since she is charged with overseeing state efforts at school improvement and be a “brain action.”

Ms. Evans-Tranumn, who is a graduate of North Carolina Central University, has a Masters from Long Island University and is working toward her doctorate at NYU, has been with the State Education Department since 1993. She is the recipient of numerous awards for excellence in education and is listed in various Who’s Who for prominent educators, women, black Americans and urban leaders. She can be seen on Channel 25 (WNVE-TV) hosting the weekly television program, Education Dialogue, airing Mondays 5:30-6:00. But Sheila Evans-Tranumn has always known who she is, if not always what she would become. Impressed in the 80s with a principal in the city who really got parents involved in schools by requiring them to put in service hours, the Commissioner says that it was this dynamic woman—Adelaide Sanford—who inspired her to move into education.

Earlier, a wonderful teacher at Erasmus Hall High School had made her fall in love with Shakespeare and she became an English teacher, with a double major in English and Math. She marries, originally, she had wanted to teach, though she works at her profession with a heart.
WHERE ARE OUR FUTURE LEADERS?

By DR. GERALDINE CHAPNEY

In a society in which the basic tenet is dramatic social, business and technological change, there are significant signs of crises in the leadership of every institution. Educational leadership is no exception.

The School Administrators Association of New York State reports the sobering information that over 50 percent of New York State Principals and over 45 percent of New York State Superintendents will retire within five years; it is also anticipated that in New York City almost half of its school leaders will leave the system within a short time. Further, the number of candidates responding to leader vacancies has dwindled precipitously. Questions that emerge are: “Where are our future leaders?” “What factors can help identify adaptive, effective school leaders?”

Acknowledging that school leaders are a key component in educational reform, the Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Education set in motion a sequence of actions to address the challenge. In 1998, a Blue Ribbon Panel on Leadership composed of representatives from public and nonpublic schools, higher education, unions, professional and community organizations was charged with exploring national, state and local leadership issues. As a result of its deliberations, the Panel presented a series of recommendations for consideration by the Regents Task Force on School Leadership. These were approved by the full Board of Regents who directed the State Education Department (SED) to launch plans for implementation.

The project to strengthen school leadership in New York State is in line with the Board of Regents strategic plan to raise educational standards for all New Yorkers, which began in 1996 with new graduation requirements and expanded in 1998 with revised teacher certification standards and reregistration procedures for every teacher education college and university program in New York State.

The current SED leadership project, of course, recognizes and embraces and will integrate the successful practices and wise tradeact stories of excellent educational leaders whose students have demonstrated spectacular achievement and accomplishments in academics, cultural and sports competition, as well as in higher education and in the world of work. During the year 2000 the State Education Department applied for and received a $3.9 million dollar three-year grant from the Dewitt Wallace-Readers Digest Fund to engage all sectors of the University of the State of New York in setting standards for educational leaders. Activi- ties developed as a result of the grant will address the following priority areas:

• A new vision for quality preparation programs for school leaders that will reset the balance between theory and practice and establish new relationships between higher education faculty and our most distinguished practitioners.

Restructuring Public School Governance

By STUART DUNN

With Mike Bloomberg assuming the office of Mayor of the City of New York, there is once again a drumbeat for eliminating the school board and placing the city schools directly under the mayor. The new mayor, like Rudy Giuliani before him, has indicated his desire for this change. This time, there is a real danger that it may happen.

It is not surprising that the mayor would like this change. Past disagreements between the mayor and the school board, and between the mayor and the chancellor (a school board appointee) have led to considerable acrimony. The school board is highly politicized, with the borough presidents each appointing one member and the mayor two members. The recent coment by three of the borough presidents that they might appoint themselves to the school board only makes this more patent. It is clear that something must be done, but turning the public school system over to the mayor is not the answer.

A primary argument for making the schools a mayoralty agency is that there should be an elected official whom the public can hold accountable for school performance. I agree, but the mayor is responsible for so many things that it would be impossible to separate his responsibility for school performance from the rest of his job. In addition, a system of checks and balances is essential. A viable alternative would be dividing the system into five borough-wide school systems, under the authority of the borough presidents. These elected officials have little responsibility for a large portion of funds for the schools. They have a better understanding of the needs of the children in their boroughs than the mayor. Most important, they could be held directly accountable for the schools with no conflicting considerations in evaluating their performance. Funding should continue to come from the state and the city. Since the city would be responsible for a large portion of funds for the schools, the mayor would still have adequate oversight opportunity. At the same time, the local school boards, which have proven to be mainly a vehicle for local politics, should be eliminated.

Placing the schools under the borough presidents would provide an ample means for local input and would save the cost of the operation and elections of the local school boards.

We need a change in school governance, but available alternatives would be dividing the system into five borough-wide school systems, or placing the city schools directly under the mayor and the school board, and between the mayor and the Superintendency.

• A new certification and credentialing structure with new titles and new procedures for program validation.
• Innovative recruitment initiatives to attract a broader pool of candidates for Principalship and the Superintendentcy.
• A series of strategies and actions to involve the media, business and the community in raising the public image of administrators and teachers and leading to a creation of an environment where leaders can succeed in improving student achievement.
• Development of a school succession plan.
• A legislative agenda to raise the salaries of educators, improve pension benefits and pension portability.

With the Dewitt Wallace-Readers Digest grant, the Commissioner has created a New York Center for Educational Leadership and appointed Dr. Kevin McGuire, former Superintendent of Half Hallows Central School District, as its Executive Director. The Center will sponsor six Leadership Academies in the Big Five cities: two in New York City and one each in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers. The SED is moving ahead with a number of additional supportive leadership grants made possible by federal funds and grants from private foundations. With the spotlight on a powerful education agenda at the federal, state and local levels and the resources to support that effort future leaders can look forward collaboratively to meeting the challenges of educational change in the 21st century.

Dr. Chapney is a member of the New York State Board of Regents.
Inside District 15 with Superintendent Carmen Fariña

“A District That Is Really Moving”

By MARYLENA MANTAS

On the first Tuesday of every month, parents and educators of Community School District 15 gather at local restaurants and dine together. The “dinner date” initiative, launched to support local businesses and the district’s public school system, which receives a percentage of the proceeds, has become possible after months of systematic meetings seeking to open the lines of communication among members of the district.

According to Superintendent Carmen Fariña, establishing this sense of community became her first priority when she was appointed district superintendent without many years in the field.

Recently, the district has concentrated its efforts on staff development through developing a unique model based on collaboration with other schools in the district that will replicate the successful model.

The principals of schools placed in these clusters meet at least twice a month and their schools share resources, such as staff development and afterschool programs. In addition, they often hold joint PTA meetings and school activities. Volpe, whose school participates in the Enrichment cluster, finds the system "very effective" and stated that it fosters "a lot of talking and collaboration."

"Through the cluster system everyone has something to offer," said Fariña. "It’s hard to go school-to-school to make change, but if you have three schools working together, change is more feasible."

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“In this neighborhood you find kids with mixed backgrounds,” she said. “The cluster system provides a balance. We create a school environment — to order the book that started it all — call us at (600) 315-8640.

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It is Time to Reexamine the Responsibilities of Supervisors & Administrators

By JILL LEVY

“Why’ve got mail!” or some other signal on the computer demands your immediate attention. An entire ream of paper lies at the foot of the fax machine. The mailman has left what appears to be his entire mailbag in your office. If you are lucky enough to have several phone lines, they have not stopped ringing since your arrival. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members are lined up at your door competing for your undivided attention and the school day hasn’t even officially started. Welcome to the world of the principal and the assistant principal.

Today’s school leaders are expected to do more and more. They are held accountable for everything. But being an effective educational leader requires more than just organizing, budgeting, and managing a school. Not only are educational leaders expected to spend significant time in classrooms evaluating teacher performance, they must be able to interpret and use test data and other statistics and provide teachers with the expertise and resources to improve instruction.

In addition to instructional matters, school leaders are expected to maintain a safe and orderly environment, hold meetings with countless committees, effectively “market” their schools, develop and implement a school plan and budget, oversee renovations and custodial services, maintain appropriate records in a timely fashion, community outreach and fundraising, work with parents and answer all of the countless requests for information, and statistics thrown at them. It is any wonder that more and more principals and assistant principals are saying the job is no longer doable?

It is time to seriously reexamine the roles and responsibilities of principals, assistant principals and other supervisors and administrators. Already there are reports coming from across the country that school administrators feel their working conditions and cumulative stresses are becoming unbearable. Higher standards, critical media attention, lack of support, legislative wrangling over governance and the impact of budget reductions and technology demanding immediate feedback are contributing to the creation of a leadership crisis.

We cannot continue to insist that principals do and be everything. In the private sector, when business leaders set specific goals for their organizations, they acknowledge that a manager cannot oversee the entire operation without appropriate human resources, training tools and technical assistance. Successful companies pride themselves on keeping their middle and senior management well trained. Some even demand that a significant portion of an employee’s annual work time be spent in professional training programs.

Unfortunately, our public schools seem to be doing it backwards. Instead of focusing on needed resources and professional support to encourage school leaders to excel, outrageous expectations and demands are causing principal assistants and other principals to either retire or look to calmer and greener fields. This in turn causes aspiring leaders who understand the true nature of school leadership in urban schools to become more and more reluctant to apply for vacancies.

Research has shown that successful schools have principals who are immersed in instruction. Yet, job demands often distract principals from that primary focus. It is time for legislators, school boards, parents and communities to work with school leaders to determine what it takes to run a successful school and to encourage educational professionals to become school administrators and supervisors. Only by providing the support principals and assistant principals need to do their jobs will we insure the success of our students.

Jill Levy is the President of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators which represents principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and administrators in NYC public schools and day care directors.

From Horror to Hope

By MATILDA RAFFA CUOMO

In the wake of September 11, the children of New York City need, more than ever, to gain an understanding of other children’s cultures. Structured mentoring programs, like Mentoring USA, provide an ideal opportunity for children to learn about diversity from their mentors. Mentoring USA has made a special offer to counsel all participants in its program on how to best deal with the tragedy, in part by using it as a platform upon which to discuss the importance of tolerance and peaceful resolution.

Mentoring USA’s BRAVE (Bias-Related Anti-Violence Education) program uses biological and autobiographical material as a reading tool to enhance children’s self-esteem and sense of cultural heritage, to open discussions about the heroes and experiences of various racial, cultural, and ethnic groups and to facilitate discussions about diversity, overcoming obstacles, and the non-violent resolution of conflict.

On January 10, Bloomington’s unveiled its newest window, celebrating the first National Mentoring Month and the store’s long-term partnership with Mentoring USA. For the past four years, 45 Bloomington’s employees have spent an hour every week with at-risk third graders from nearby PS 59, offering the guidance and support every child needs. At the celebration, the children joined in painting pictures in the window that depict our society’s rich cultural diversity, and a bright banner reminded onlookers that “Today’s Children Are Tomorrow’s World.”

Mentoring USA’s BRAVE program received a powerful boost on January 10, when David McCourt, a father and husband who tragically lost his daughter and wife on United Flight 175 on September 11, appeared on the Today show with Al Roker, Michael Gould (President of Bloomington’s), and with me, in front of the Bloomington’s window. Mr. McCourt announced that he created the Juliana McCourt Educational Fund to memorialize his daughter, Juliana, and had donated $90,000 to the BRAVE program, in order to help children learn to respect and value one another as human beings.

When Mr. McCourt describes his interest in the BRAVE program, he talks about his daughter: “Juliana, at four years old, was an extraordinary example of a person who displayed sensitivity to everyone’s feelings. Her gift of love to all children manifested her mother’s love. If we can pass that gift on to create more harmony among children, future generations will be more compassionate. Juliana will have given the greatest spiritual gift. We are awarding monies to the Mentoring USA program because it meets our objectives of striving to educate young people everywhere in the virtues of generosity, kindness and appreciation of differences among cultures, races, and religions.”

On September 11, terrorists who hated us so much that they would give their own life to take ours, murdered thousands of people and demolished our Twin Towers. But on that same day, while victims fled the building to safety, hundreds of valiant men and women—firefighters, police, and emergency workers—rushed into the smoke and flames because they loved us so much they would risk their own lives to save ours. David McCourt and BRAVE program represent this beautiful antidote to the horror of 9/11.

We must never forget the magnificent demonstration of the American spirit rising above the tragedy, as we embrace each other and look to the future with hope and togetherness.
By BRUCE MYINT

New York public school teachers face tough challenges in the wake of the September 11th attacks. Their task: to help young people face the complicated issues surrounding 9/11 while promoting cross-cultural awareness and understanding. It is a difficult undertaking, but at a recent Teach-In, hosted by Teachers College, Columbia University, roughly 500 school teachers and administrators from the metropolitan New York area met to do just that.

“We’re trying to prepare children for a world that is in flux,” said Arthur Levine, President of Teachers College, in a speech welcoming participants to the day-long event.

The Teach-In for Teaching and Learning in a New Global Environment offered participants an eclectic mix of over 50 small-group workshops and forums including such topics as: “Designing Curriculum in Response to September 11th,” “The Impact of 9/11 on Kindergarten Students,” “Muslims in New York,” and “The Internet as a Vehicle for Helping Learners to Understand and Respond to Global Issues.”

The event, organized in only a matter of months by a group of curriculum and outreach specialists under the leadership of President Levine, brought participants together with scholars, political leaders, and experts on teaching and learning in a rapidly changing global environment.

Keynote speakers included Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of the United Nations Children’s Fund, Harold O. Levy, Chancellor of New York City Schools, and middle-school teacher Stacey Fell-Eisenkraft with members of her 8th grade class.

The need for the Teach-In was urgent. Keynote addresses described that in the weeks following the attacks students asked questions that teachers often found difficult to answer. Chancellor Levy shared heartrending stories of young teachers, some in only their fifth day of their career, bravely guiding their students out of the chaos of September 11th.

Carol Bellamy underscored the immediate need for students “to think about war and political violence in an informed and open-minded way.”

The Teach-In aimed at helping such teachers and their students cope with the effects of the attacks by emphasizing suitable content for a post 9/11 curriculum.

Acknowledging the trauma experienced by both teachers and students, Barry Rosen, Executive Director of External Affairs at Teachers College, remarked, “We see this as a community service for the teachers of the metropolitan area.”

Making matters even more complicated for teachers is the fact that in order to create a post 9/11 curriculum, they must often include content not found in typical lesson plans. Topics such as the role of women in Islamic societies, globalism, and human and civil rights may be unfamiliar but are nevertheless crucial. “Schools can teach intolerance and anger just as they teach diversity and freedom,” said Chancellor Levy. “We need to be cognizant of both.”

Such complex curricular changes involve a long-term commitment. However, it is one that is well suited to the educators who play a vital role in helping the metropolitan area on its road to recovery. Says President Levine, “I don’t know any slower way to change the world than education. But I also don’t know a more effective way.”

Although many workshops focused on curriculum design, the Teach-In also included a panel discussion on civil liberties and human rights during war time. Panelists included Maxine Greene, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Education at Teachers College, Ira Glasser, former Executive Director of the ACLU, Norman Siegel, former Executive Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, and Anne Nelson, Director of the International Program at Columbia University’s School of Journalism.

Bruce Myint is an intern at Education Update and a doctoral candidate at Teachers College.

Chancellor Harold Levy spoke at a Teach-In for educators recently.
Private Profits, Public Lands: Old-Growth Logging on National Forests

By SERA BILEZKYAN

Only four percent of old-growth forests remain standing in the Northwestern United States. Old-growth trees are defined as being at least 32 inches in diameter, and ranging in age from 200 to 1000 years old. Despite the fact that many ancient forests are on public lands, these majestic trees are in immediate danger of being logged. Under federal timber plans, the majority of public forests are not protected. The United States Forest Service sells timber on public lands at a cheap, publicly subsidized rate to multinational-dollar timber corporations such as Weyerhaeuser and Boise Cascade. The corporations then clearcut the land, and sell the timber off at immense profits, whether it is to be second-growth and thinning, rather than clearcutting. The Siuslaw has added more money to the Federal Treasury than any other national forest. This proves the possibility of a successful transition from a boom-and-bust economy such as the one logging creates in communities, to a sustainable practice focused on forest restoration and the creation of high-skilled, high-wage jobs in the woods. Thousands of species of animals, plants, lichens, and fungi are dependent upon the old-growth forest ecosystem to thrive, from the fertile soil to the upper canopy. Spotted owls, lynx, and red tree voles are just a few. The old-growth trees themselves, stretching from the northern coast of California to the Rocky Mountains are being clearcut at an alarming rate, leaving behind unsightly and barren scars on the land. In addition, nearby communities are left in danger of landslides or blowdowns. Soil erosion is often a consequence of clearcutting, and water and groundwater systems are also disrupted. No less crucial is the gaping hole the absence of our forests is leaving in the legacy of natural beauty that has come to define the wild lands of the American west.

There is a myth of protection when it comes to these forests on our public lands, and it is important that communities be aware that the threat to their forests is being funded by their taxes. There is no need to use old-growth lumber to make paper when there are various alternatives, from non-old-growth trees to industrial hemp, which could all be used cheaply and effectively with less impact on the environment. Despite what timber interest group’s claim, the logging of ancient forests is not necessary in order to prevent wildfires or disease. Powerful timber interests are busy lobbying in order to lessen environmental regulations concerning logging, as well as to discredit environmental groups.

According to a recent survey by Davis & Hibbitts, Inc., a Portland-based opinion and market research group, the majority of both urban and rural people in the Northwest support an end to old-growth logging on public lands; 75 percent overall and 67 percent in the areas where logging and other resource-extraction based activities are prevalent. In other words, most people are convinced that it is time for the Federal Government to stop selling our ancient forests to timber corporations. In every endeavor from tree-sitting to appealing timber sales, environmental activists are sending a clear message to the timber corporations as well as the government. Ancient forests should exist for future generations, and for those in search of the very roots of this land.

Sources: Oregon Natural Resources Council, National Forest Protection Campaign.
Sera Bilezkyan graduated from Evergreen State College, WA in June 2001. This article is an example of the kinds of things which she believed in. It is published in her memory.
AOL, Bank Street, UFT & NYU Help New Educators

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Judith Rizzo, Deputy Schools Chancellor, recently spoke at “The New Educator Support Team” (NEST) event, launched by a collaboration of AOL, the Bank Street College of Education, the UFT and New York University to ensure the success of new teachers. The NEST project will support, develop and retain new teachers. A team in each school consisting of experienced teachers, administrators, principals, a NEST facilitator, and UFT reps will provide plans and a program of activities. According to Rizzo, this initiative is one of several that will allow colleagues to take the time to talk to each other and to be creative. Educators are not just after money."

NYU Professor Anthony quipped that there are three lies we hear in life: “Darling I love you. The check is in the mail, and I’m an administrator.” NYU has made schools welcome places for new teachers. One principal from the Bronx cited the importance of the school’s retreats each fall and at the end of the year for new and old teachers. Curriculum is developed and important bonds are forged. This year, 27 out of 28 teachers returned to her school.

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Students At Old Saybrook HS Rebuild First Submarine

By TOM KERTES

It’s no secret that educators in schools across the country are desperate for ways to kindle their students’ interest with fun and innovative lessons. But few can match the extraordinary project led by Scott Schoonmaker, the Principal at Old Saybrook High School, Connecticut.

“We will build an authentic life-size, working replica of the Turtle, the first submarine ever used in warfare,” Schoonmaker said. In 1776, General George Washington, was determined to find some way to drive the English fleet out of New York Harbor. Washington enlisted the help of Yale graduate David Bushnell, who came up with the idea of building a one-man submarine. That submarine, called the Turtle, was designed to dive under the invading vessels and attach a bomb to the underside of the command ship.

While the attack was not entirely successful – Bushnell could not attach the bomb — the subsequent explosion did have a major psychological impact on the British and had a notable influence on the outcome of the war. But why rebuild the Turtle over 200 years later? The town of Old Saybrook shares a special connection with Bushnell’s invention. Located on Long Island Sound next to the Connecticut River, Old Saybrook High School is surrounded by water on three sides. More importantly, Bushnell once lived in the town and, in fact, his descendants attend the school to this day.

“That is why Fred Frese, the boat-maker who built the first Turtle replica in 1977, called me with the idea,” Schoonmaker said. “As it was also a special anniversary of the submarine’s original creation, I naturally grabbed onto it like it was manna from heaven.”

Schoonmaker immediately seized the opportunity to build a complex and engaging curriculum that revolved around the Turtle replica. The students will not only deal with the construction and testing process but they will also get a flavor of the events and psychology of the Revolutionary War. In addition, they will have the opportunity to confront the same math, science, and geometry problems Bushnell struggled with 225 years earlier.

“We also plan to stick with a boat-making curriculum once we’re done,” Schoonmaker said. “Next we plan to build kayaks and canoes, and learn of their history and the reasons for their existence.”

Approximately 150 students in grades 9-12 will be involved in the Turtle project, which will last over a period of about six months. The on-going construction, the re-creation of the original underwater attack, and the rest of the educational program will be broadcast, in real time, by web-cam to students across the country. “Along with major corporations like Coca Cola and Toyota, one of our other sponsors is the History Channel,” Schoonmaker said. “So don’t be surprised if you see a TV special on our project one day very soon as well.”

The Turtle project is set to launch in about two months and should last throughout the spring semester. “I’m looking forward to this,” Schoonmaker said. “But, even more important, I haven’t seen the kids get this excited about something school-related in a long, long time.”

The Turtle.

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Open Society Institution

Applications for the 2002 New York City Community Fellowships

The Open Society Institute (OSI) is currently accepting applications from community activists interested in establishing public interest projects that address critical social justice issues throughout New York City. OSI established the New York City Community Fellowship Program to support individuals from diverse backgrounds to use their creativity and passion to provide opportunities for disadvantaged communities. The program supports progressive public initiatives that provide advocacy, direct services, or organizing efforts for marginalized communities to participate in an open society. OSI will provide a fellowship stipend award, over 100,000, and other resources to support the development of each selected project.

Applications are due by Friday, April 19, 2002 by 5PM.

For an application, please contact CommunityFellowship@openso.org, or visit our webpage at www.soros.org/fellow/community.html for additional information regarding information workshops.

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Teachers Gather to Learn High-Tech Methods at Thirteen/WNET National Teacher Training Institute

Approximately 225 educators from across New York City gathered at the Jamaica Learning Center/Auxiliary Services for High Schools in Queens to turn stagnant two-dimensional lesson plans into fully engaging learning experiences with the click of a mouse or remote control. Adding the web and video to formulaic standards-based lessons is part of Thirteen/WNET New York’s National Teacher Training Institute (NTTI). The Institute aims to use methodology in a segmented, interactive way to engage students and create enthusiasm. Lessons on the flat pages of a book take on a whole new dimension when viewed on video or through computers or the Internet in the classroom, according to a 1999 survey on public school teachers’ use of computers and the Internet, commissioned by the National Center for Education Statistics. Only 33 percent indicated that they were “very well prepared.”

With a wealth of educational television programming and a universe of material on the World Wide Web, NTTI has stood in the vanguard of professional development for teachers since it was founded in 1990 and continues to lead teachers in the use of educational media. “Classrooms across the country are equipped with computers and VCRs. All the equipment is in place. Some teachers remain intimidated by such technology. We need to encourage teachers to familiarize themselves with these tools and use them in an interactive, dynamic way that contributes to the classroom learning experience,” said Marsha Drummond, Thirteen’s National Project Director for NTTI.

By the end of 2002, more than 40,000 teachers will have been trained in this national program. Founded in 1990, NTTI methodology emphasizes a variety of collaborative, technology-based, hands-on projects.

Calendar of Events
February 2002

Open Houses
Although it is not specifically requested by every school, rest are strongly advised to call schools to confirm dates and times and verify if appointments are needed.

Adelphi Academy,
(718) 238-2008, Extension 213;
501 North Boulevard, Brooklyn, NY 11210
Wed., Feb. 6 ~ 7 pm; Thu., Feb. 7 ~ 3 pm;
Fri., Feb. 8 ~ 2 pm; Sat., Feb. 9 ~ 2 pm

Community School District 3:
After & Twilight Program,
(312) 787-6287, MaryAnn Amaia
Jamaica, NY 11413
Program is available at all 18 different schools in Manhattan.

Sunday, April 21:
Continuing Education for Adults 63 and over,
Spring Semester, Feb. 26 ~ May 1, 2002
Martin Luther King, Jr. HighSchool
50 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn
Program is available at 8 different schools in Manhattan.

Thirteen/WNET New York, NTTI is a partner of 30 public television stations. By the end of 2002, more than 140,000 teachers are strongly advised to call schools to confirm dates and times and verify if appointments are needed.

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Museum for African Art: Relevant and Alive

By TOM KERTES

Pop quiz time: How many institutions in the United States deal with the exhibition, appreciation, and interpretation of African art? The logical answer would be, oh, maybe 20? 30? Even 50? Try two. “And the other one is a part of the Smithsonian Institution,” says Anne Starke, Deputy Director of the Museum for African Art (MFAA). What’s left, of course, is the quaint Soho Museum—located in an obscure nook of downtown Broadway, near Prince Street. It is the only independent institution of its kind in the country. This fact is stunning, especially when you consider that the MFAA, in its current location, is too small to house a permanent exhibit. “We’re in the process of securing funding for a new, far larger space in Northern Manhattan,” Starke says. “But that building won’t be ready for at least a couple of years. In the meantime, we’re doing the best we can.”

And their efforts are admirable, indeed. Even while changing exhibits every 3-4 months, the MFAA has deeply impacted the community with its consistent cultural and educational excellence. “Education is indeed a large part of MFAA’s mission,” says Holder. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. The MFAA also aims to emerge as the leading publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the...”

In order to do so, each exhibit—the MFAA has had 40 in its 18 years of existence, most receiving universal acclaim—is carefully designed to achieve a profound cultural and educational purpose. Some of the recent ones have dealt with the history of hair, and the meaning and mythology of masks. The current wildly successful exhibit, running through March 3rd, is entitled “Bamana: The Art of Existence in Mali.”

“The Bamana people believe in the existence of a ‘force’,” Holder said. “This force is inside every person and every object; it is some kind of a deeply spiritual entity. Such a force, once harnessed, can take many forms. It can be political, cultural, create resonant symbols, even cure pain or unite communities toward a common goal.”

Through a combination of school tours, after-school programs, workshops, booklets, and specially prepared Teachers’ Guides, students not only learn to appreciate African art but are acquainted with the geography and economy of Mali, as well as its cultures and customs. “We try to make the programs as interactive, as all-encompassing, as hands-on, as possible,” Holder said. “People, especially students, tend to think of African art as something old, out-of-date, purely traditional. But we want them to get rid of that misconception. In fact, this art is vibrant, alive, always changing, constantly impacted by our times. It is tremendously relevant to everything that’s going on in our lives, right here, right now.”

The museum’s work does not stop there. The MFAA also aims to emerge as the leading publisher of school-books and academic texts on African art. “We want to be the preeminent resource on the subject in the United States,” said Starke. “And I think we’re well on our way of getting there.”

MUSEUM/MUSIC EVENTS

Children’s Museum of Manhattan

January 12-September 2, 2002

Where the Wild Things Are: Maurice Sendak in His Own Words and Pictures

Get inside Sendak’s books and discover a world of imagination with insights into the artist’s Jewish heritage.

January 19-April 9, 2002

Exhibition of Father & Son: Jerry & Brian Pinkey

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr’s Birthday and African-American History Month.

Opens March 2, 2002

Kevin Henks: Lily and Friends

In the Helena Rubenstein Literacy Center.

February 3, 10, 17-22, 2002

Conundrum

A Caribbean Cinderella story in a 1-person theatrical performance featuring the work of Brian Pinkey (20 minutes).

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Museum of American Financial History

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Drachmas, Doubloons and Dollars

Guided tours of the American Numismatic Society’s exhibit on the history on money. Federal Reserve Bank of NY, 33 Liberty St., 1-10 PM. Reservations required, space may be limited, bring photo ID. Free.

February 21, 2002

Lecture and Book Signing

Gregory S. Bell, In the Black: A History of African Americans on Wall Street.

NYU Stern School, 44 W4th St., Rm. KMC 1-70, 6 PM. Free.

For more information call (212) 908-4110 or visit financialhistory.org.
MUSIC FESTIVALS IN ISRAEL: SOLACE FOR THE TROUBLED

By IRVING SPITZ

Israel’s musical life, always strong, is flourishing, in spite of its economic and political troubles. One reason is that the country has received a tremendous boost in the last two decades by the influx of a large number of competent musicians from the former Soviet Union. Partly as a result of the availability of this new talent, a number of new orchestras have been set up and older established institutions have been strengthened. All of these orchestras give regular subscription concerts, in addition, Israel hosts several international music festivals.

First and foremost is the annual Israel Festival. The most memorable event at the most recent festival was the appearance of soprano Kiri te Kanawa, on her first visit to Israel. Her program comprised arias by Handel and Mozart as well as those from the French and Italian repertory. At 56, she is nearing the end of an illustrious career, but remarkably her voice still retains all the brilliance of the high notes although some of the lower register has gone. She attained heavenly heights in her rendering of Handel’s Punggero la sorte mia (I Shall Weep For My Fate) from his Giulio Cesare. She concluded with an encore, her show-stopper, O mio Babbino Caro (Oh My Beloved Father) from Puccini’s Gianni Schicchi. She was accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra of Rishon Letzion under conductor Asher Fisch, who successfully captured the subtle nuances of the scores in the diverse repertory. Her rapport with conductor, orchestra and audience was extraordinary; this was a concert to remember and cherish.

An equally impressive festival event was a performance of Verdi’s penultimate opera, Otello, by the Israel Opera, which was staged at the spectacular Roman amphitheatre in Caesaria. Like many other outdoor venues, this has the usual drawbacks with uncomfortable seating and problematic acoustics, compounded in this case by the gentle lapping of the waves and the occasional drone of an overflying aircraft. The part of Otello was taken by tenor Gaby Sadeh. He was most convincing and conveyed the requisite arrogance, pride, jealousy and pathos characteristic of the role. Iago, sung by Boaz Senator, was effective but despite amplification, his voice was frequently drowned out. Desdemona was sung by Larissa Tsetev, a light soprano. She displayed the required air of innocence, as a balance between the evil Iago and the complex Otello, her willow song and Ave Maria being especially poignant. Alexander Listiyanisky’s sets were dramatic and grandiose, possibly even a bit overwhelming, and Avi-Yona Bueno’s lighting was particularly effective. The staging also featured a ballet scene at the arrival of the Venetian ambassador at the conclusion of Act 3. Not often included in regular performances, this was well suited to an outdoor venue, contributing to a performance which would be a credit to any international festival.

An outstanding Israeli musical tradition is the annual chamber music series established by the renowned pianist Elena Bashikova, wife of Daniel Barenboim. Many prominent international soloists and recognized chamber musicians participate, contributing their talents on a voluntary basis. The festival is currently in its fourth year. Most concerts in this series are given at the Jerusalem Khan, an old Turkish building with an intimate theatre well suited to chamber music. The program is built around a theme, which on this occasion was transcriptions and transformations of well-known pieces by their composers or by others. The festival usually lasts about 9 days and amongst the most memorable highlights was the performance of Emmanuel Palud, the former principal flutist of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, who gave a masterful account of Debussy’s Prelude a l’apres-midi d’un faune and his Serenade for flute. He was joined by the outstanding solo oboist, Francois Leleux, in duos by WF Bach and Mozart. Leleux himself gave an inspiring performance of Telemann’s fantasy for oboe, Matthias Gander, principal clarinetist from the Staatskapelle, joined pianist Elena Bashikova and the exceptional cellist Boris Fergamentshikov in an exciting performance of Beethoven’s own arrangement of his Septet Op 20 for trio. There was also an interesting performance of Bach’s Goldberg Variations transcribed for string trio by violinist Dmitry Sitkovetsky, who was joined by violinist Gerard Cause and cellist Jean-Guihen Queyran in this exciting, unusual rendition. Other prominent performers included violinists Nikolai Znaider and Renaud Capucon. They joined violinist Michael Tree, a founding member of the Guarneri Quartet, and cellist Boris Fergamentshikov and Sennu Laine, the principal of the Staatskapelle, in an unforgettable performance of Schubert’s profusely eloquent string quartet in C major, D 956. This was specially added to the program and dedicated to the memory of the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks. There could be no more memorable tribute than the soaring harmony, epitomizing despair, melancholy, but also hope, that characterizes the adagio movement of this great masterpiece.

Another annual musical festival is a Liturgical series hosted by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in which local and international soloists and choir groups participate. This year the choral groups were the Budapest Academic Choral Society and the local Philharmonia Singers. I heard an excellent rendition of Brahms’ Deutche Requiem under conductor Lawrence Foster, musical adviser of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, with Israeli soprano Michal Shamir and American bass-baritone Thomas Carson. Carson was joined by Italian soprano Fiorella Burato, Israeli mezzo Susanna Poretsky and Italian tenor Vicente Ombuendo in a dramatic, taut performance of Verdi’s requiem, which was led by Dan Ettinger, conductor in residence of the Israel New Opera. He led a lively and impressive performance that managed to coax the maximum from orchestra, choirs and soloists, all contributing to a memorable account of the work. Soloists and choirs all acquitted themselves admirably but the highest accolades must be given to the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, whose playing has improved dramatically over the last few years.

Because of the current unrest, Israel is going through a major crisis. There are few tourists, hotels are all but empty, and restaurants are closing. The buoyant optimism seen only 18 months ago has dissipated; bringing in its wake sadness and failed aspirations. Nevertheless, despite or possibly because of this, the rich music life of the country continues. Israelis require some antidote to turn them away from the grim news on radio and TV.
African History Month Events in NYC

“I REMEMBER HARLEM”
February 7, 2002; 6pm; Donnell Library Center, 20 West 53rd Street, 10019. (212) 621-0618
Influential documentary filmmaker Bill Miles and producer Janita Howard will present and discuss their films on African-American history, including “I Remember Harlem,” their in-depth social, political, and religious history of Harlem, New York City. Titles to be screened to be announced. Adults.

“CELEBRATING LANGSTON HUGHES’S 100 BIRTHDAY, 1902-1967”
February 12, 2002; Tuesday 4pm; New York Public Library, Harlem Branch; 9 W. 124th St. [between Fifth & Lenox Aves.]; New York, NY. 10027; (212) 348-5620
Thelma Thomas will pay tribute to the literary work and career of Langston Hughes, one of the foremost African American poet and writers. In celebration of African American Heritage Month. All ages.

MUSICAL TALES FROM AFRICA
February 13, 2002; Wednesday 4:30pm; Queens Borough Public Library, Kew Gardens Hills; 72-33 Vleigh Place,Flushing, NY, 11367; (718) 261-6654
Storyteller Tammy Hall and percussionist Hasan Bakr take the audience on enchanting journey, displaying cultural link between music, stories steeped in beauty and the wisdom of Africans. Mhira, djeem drum, shereke are featured. For children, all ages/families.

THE URBAN RAILROAD UNDERGROUND IN FLUSHING
February 19, 2002; Tuesday 4pm;
Queens Borough Public Library; CIL; 89-11 Merrick Boulevard, Jamaica, NY, 11432. (718) 990-0700

“CELEBRATE AFRICAN AMERICAN POETS”
February 25, 2002; Monday 6pm; Free.
Brooklyn Heights Library, 289 Cadman Plaza near Boro Hall, Brooklyn Heights, NY. Info: (718) 623-7100, daniela@garden.net

SUSHI CHEF TADEO MIKAMI: THE APOGEE OF ART & FOOD

By LAURA PRETTO

As a child, Tadeo Mikami wanted to be a policeman, but when he was 16 he was drafted into his family’s restaurant where he found his real passion: designing, creating, and serving Japanese cuisine.

At the age of 17, Mikami joined a group of exceptional chefs licensed to prepare Fugu (blowfish), which is considered one of the greatest delicacies in Japan but is poisonous if prepared incorrectly. It is prepared in 20 minutes under the supervision of two judges.

“[I]t is an extremely hard skill to acquire,” according to Keita Sato, the manager of Hatsuhana, where Mikami is the chef. “Three out of four cannot pass this test. He is in an extremely select group.”

Mikami brought his cooking expertise to New York 26 years ago and for the past three years has been head chef at Hatsuhana, a Kappo Kaiseki (a story) restaurant. As the restaurant’s menu simply explains, “Kappo is a variety of small, savory dishes served to complement sake. Kaiseki cuisine consists of the day’s freshest ingredients in a tasting course format. While Mikami is preparing a dish, an observer gets an idea of how focused he is. His movements are controlled, precise, and unhurried (but amazingly swift). Behind the Kappo bar is a limited amount of space, about 10 feet long and three feet wide. He and his under-chefs move deftly around the small space and in and out of the kitchen continuously.

Mr. Mikami loves his work because of the constant changes and innovations it requires. Yet, teaching his craft to others also gives him satisfaction. At one point, he was teaching Japanese cuisine to classes of up to 40 students at a time. “I love [to teach], if people are interested in learning,” said Mikami. “If they are not, I never teach.” According to Mikami, a chef who learns from a master Japanese-trained chef tends to remain faithful to authentic Japanese cuisine.

“If you learn directly from a Japanese-trained teacher, you will get more authentic food,” Mikami emphasized, adding “If you study under the right chef, you won’t have trouble learning.” He added, “You are unlimited in how much you can expand [creatively and technically].”

Great chefs need advisors too, according to Mikami. He gets most of his advice from the owner of Hatsuhana. Some elements of Japanese cuisine always evolve. Mikami explained that Japanese cuisine is not concerned only with taste, but also with stimulating the other four senses.

Following a path that has become traditional for Japanese chefs, he took classes in Japan on the art of flower arranging, calligraphy, and tea ceremonies, which he says are very beneficial to mastering Japanese cuisine. These skills have helped him in making dishes that have themes because they give a better idea of what is going to please the senses. Often, customers do not understand that the selection of food in a given dish is not random, but that each item represents something. Mikami often takes the time to explain the meaning of a dish, consequently compounding everyone’s enjoyment.

When a customer takes the time to look at the dish before eating it, he is aware of the artistry of Mikami’s work. “Customers are the ultimate judges and when people say ‘wow, then I feel great,” says Mikami. “You can visit Mikami at Hatsuhana, 17 E. 48th St, (212) 355-3343.

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For further information, call (212) 496-8400, ext. 49. Erica Price, Summer Program Director.

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Ball-Stick-Bird’s unexpected successes with challenged adults and children raised questions about the validity of intelligence theory and IQ tests, eventually leading to a new theory of cognition. The Ball-Stick-Bird data and the cognitive theory it generated were reported and discussed at Annual Meetings of the American Psychological Association.

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Resources For Children With Special Needs, Inc. publishes two new important directories February 1, 2002.

The Comprehensive Directory: Programs and services for children with youth with disabilities and special needs and their families in the metro New York area. The Comprehensive Directory includes more than 2,800 agencies and over 5,000 programs and services covering every need for children with disabilities.

Education programs, from Early Intervention through postsecondary; Child Care Services; After School programs; Adoption and foster care; Health care – Home health care, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, therapies, medical expense assistance, and more; employment services; counseling services; residential programs; recreation; battered women’s shelters and homeless shelters; housing information; help lines; legal and advocacy services; mediation, mentoring, parenting skills and parent and mentor support groups.

The Comprehensive Directory covers programs for children with physical, mental or learning disabilities. Guided to families in the New York metropolitan area, this book will allow parents, caregivers, and professionals to find the services they need instantly.

Arranged alphabetically, and indexed by service and by disability for easy searching. Each entry includes contact information, population, ages and area served, a brief description, and wheelchair accessibility, as well as services offered by the Agency. The Comprehensive Directory, 1096 pages, $55.00 plus $7.00 for shipping and handling.

CAMPS 2002: A directory of camps and summer programs for children and youth with disabilities and special needs in the metro New York area.

The 18th Edition of CAMPS 2002, the most complete and authoritative resource available for locating summer camps and programs for Metro-New York area children and teens with special needs includes descriptions of New York City Metro area day camps, sleep away camps in the Northeast and travel programs throughout the United States. More than 350 special and mainstream programs included. Also provides a special section on the key questions parents and caregivers should ask when interviewing a camp director and selecting the right program for a child or teen. An essential resource for parents and caregivers of children and teens with special needs, as well as for professionals who need to recommend such programs to others. The directory covers all disabilities in a single, inclusive volume.

Camps 2002 is written in both English and Spanish, and is indexed both alphabetically and by disability.

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The Journal of Developmental Education said: “When one views the incredible results of Fuller’s reading program against the educational establishment’s response, one is led to the conclusion that educators on the whole lack what Murray calls respect for the witness of what is.”
THE COURAGE TO FACE DYSEXIA: A PERSONAL STUDENT’S VOYAGE

By POLA ROSEN, E.D.D.

Adam Koplewicz, a sophomore at Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School, speaks candidly about living with dyslexia. His research, reading and experiences have enabled him to share his knowledge with the expertise of a graduate student. In fact, he recently gave a 15 minute presentation on how teachers can help dyslexic students at the Dalton School. As Adam explained, dyslexia refers to the inability to decode or read; words and letters appear as a jumble. Recent research has indicated that it is a genetic disorder frequently affecting more than one family member. Dyslexic individuals are often bright achievers who have to work much harder than their peers to accomplish the same level of work. Adam emphasized that frequently, frustration and anger can accompany the learning process.

As a nursery school student, Adam remembers that he talked and talked and was enthusiastic, but his speech didn’t make sense. At about age 3 he was tested; the diagnosis was a learning disability. His parents were told that he would only have difficulties when he went to 3rd or 4th grade and was given more complex work or had to take standardized tests. A speech therapist who played games was very helpful when Adam was 4 years old. Adam remembers one of them: he had to take photographs on the weekend and then tell what happened in each picture. This would help enhance his verbal skills. “I was always a strong student and as smart as my friends,” Adam states confidently. “When school situations occurred that made me uncomfortable, I learned tricks to either compensate or avoid work. For example, in kindergarten, if the questions were too difficult, I would go to the bathroom just before it was my turn. By the time I came back, it wasn’t my turn anymore. I even calculated, when I got older, how many minutes it would take until they called on me, and figured out how long I had to be gone. There were times I felt very frustrated.”

Adam started phonics the summer between 3rd and 4th grade. He attended a program called Lindamood-Bell for 4 hours a day and it “helped me drastically.” During the 4th grade he attended Lindamood after school for 3 weeks. As a result his reading improved. Seventh grade was the worst, according to Adam. He had a history text, had to take notes, read poetry and write English papers. It was a very frustrating year; requiring a great deal of effort on his part. Fortunately, he received a great deal of support from his parents, siblings and a phonics tutor (which he has to this day). A family decision was made to transfer Adam to Columbia Grammar Preparatory School, which is more structured than his previous school. In addition to his spending so much time on his studies and tutoring, Adam has someone look over his papers before he hands them in. He takes class tests on the computer and has just begun using software by Kurzweil that scans text and reads it aloud. “It’s terrific,” says Adam. “Dyslexia makes you feel dependent on others,” he explains, and these tools help you gain confidence in your own abilities.”

Favorite classes now are science research, a 3-year course, in which Adam and 7 other students can choose any topic they want, study for 1 and 1/2 years and then do field research. There are 3 teachers to guide and advise them. Adam’s research concentrates on dyslexia and he plans ultimately to do a type of PET scan to uncover what part of the brain is activated by reading.

Adam’s advice to parents is useful and practical. “Seek remediation as soon as possible and as much as possible; minimize the learning disability and maximize the strengths of your child; let your child participate in sports, art, science, social activities, whatever they do well in; explain to the kid what’s going on and never say you’re a bad reader, reiterate you’re smart and you’re intelligent. Self-esteem is very important. It’s also helpful to ‘hear’ stories about dyslexic people who are successful.”

Adam recommends a book, Learning Between the Lines, which deals with a dyslexic student who goes from one school to another and later becomes a superstar at the University of Pennsylvania. Adam also met an inspiring man from Goldman Sachs who has dyslexia. Many people don’t know that Governor Nelson Rockefeller (NYS) as well as the famous poet William Butler Yeats were dyslexic and yet climbed to the pinnacle of their professions.

Tips for teachers from Adam are excellent:

1. Teachers should tell students exactly what’s expected of them. As soon as you know the dates for term papers, tell your students so they can budget their time.
2. Write all information on the board.
3. Try not to take points off for spelling or grammar. Look at the content. Quality is what should be graded.
4. Try to specify which words must be spelled correctly.

Some school accommodations are in place now: allowing double time for the SAT exams and help by getting a reader or writer are invaluable for dyslexic students.

Adam Koplewicz illustrates the courage, persistence and endurance that are required to overcome the odds.

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FEBRUARY 2002 • EDUCATION UPDATE • SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Transitional Programming for Students with Disabilities

By STEPHEN C. LUCE, Ph.D., GEORGE LINKE, Psy.D., AND BERNADETTE R. MCNULTY, Ph.D.

At a recent Melmark staff meeting, we discussed transitional planning for “John,” an eight-year-old student with a traumatic brain injury (TBI) who resides at our school for children with developmental disabilities and TBI. John has made incredible progress at Melmark, pursuing special education classes as well as physical, occupational and speech therapy goals while recovering from injuries related to a childhood accident. Staff have begun preparing for a state-mandated interdisciplinary team meeting where John’s parents/guardians and professional staff will begin developing goals for meeting John’s future educational and residential needs.

Federal and state laws mandate conditions for the education of children with special needs; one condition ensures they are educated in the least restrictive setting necessary to meet their educational needs. Settings range from a few hours of special education instruction or speech therapy to placement in a separate special classroom or school. Any special setting designed for children such as John must be transitional in nature—so John’s educational curriculum must be focused on teaching him skills that promote success in less restrictive environments. For example, John’s goals should be designed to transition him gradually to an environment appropriate to his age and intellectual and physical abilities.

We use several sources of information to determine what skills will most benefit John or any child in his situation. Before setting transitional objectives, we consider 1) the research literature; 2) the deficits that necessitated his original placement in special education; and 3) the skills he will need in future environments.

The research literature suggests that community living opportunities are greatest for those who are more independent and free of dysfunctional behaviors that make others uncomfortable; independence in hygiene and other personal care skills are also crucial transitional objectives. When students are placed in special education settings, they must have proven they could not succeed in a less restrictive setting. A survey of past settings by special education teachers receiving new students should assess what specific skill deficits compelled the referral to yield important information about needed transitional skills.

A survey of future settings also proves important in cases like John’s, where he was referred from one pre-injury setting (a regular 2nd grade classroom), receives special instruction at Melmark, and then prepares for transition to a new setting, such as a special education classroom in a community public school. The interdisciplinary team will determine what skills John needs to succeed in the anticipated setting. A future environment assessment is particularly important in cases where a student has been placed in a restrictive setting for an extended period of time or where a natural educational setting is not currently available.

Continued on next page


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Transitional Programming for Students with Disabilities

continued from prior page

transition is involved, like a teen planning for life after graduation. Visiting the future setting and observing the skills of people succeeding in that setting will help to clarify the highest priority skills necessary for future success.

Our work with children and adults with intellectual disabilities in residential settings, both home and in the community, has shown that continued close supervision throughout the day and overnight independence, he will most likely return home to a less restrictive placement.

In conclusion, all special education placements are transitional in nature. A child’s interdiscipli- nary team must identify—from past settings as well as future transitional settings—priority skills in which the student must develop competence.

Stephen C. Luce, Ph.D. is the Senior Executive Director of Programs and Operations for Melmark, Inc. Bernadette R. McNulty, Ph.D. is Director of Foundation Relations for Melmark, Inc. Melmark is a day and residential program for children and adults with developmental disabilities in Berwyn, Pennsyl- vania just outside of Philadelphia.

Screening Companies for Socially Responsible Investments

The first step in deciding a socially responsible mutual fund is to look within yourself and think about your own values. There are over 200 socially responsible mutual funds in the United States and they’re not all the same. Some of these funds concentrate solely on environmental issues, some may include religious issues, and many embrace a wide range of issues. You can find information on how a socially responsible fund company chooses companies for its portfolio on their website and in their literature. It’s best to review this information to make sure the fund is investing in companies that coincide with your values.

What is a “social screen”? It’s how the fund reviews companies for investment from the socially responsible point of view. All of the companies undergo a rigorous financial analysis and then must pass a series of social screens in order to be considered for investment. For example, Pax World Funds excludes companies that derive revenue from the manufacturing of weapons, tobacco, gambling or pornography. Those types of companies are “screened out.” However, the process doesn’t stop there. Pax World also looks at a company’s environmental impact and labor policies and practices. Once a company passes the social screens and the financial analysis, it may be added to the portfolio. However, it doesn’t end there. Socially responsible funds continue to monitor the companies within the portfolio. When issues of concern come up, the fund companies may engage in “shareholder activism.” As a shareholder activist, the funds may start a dialogue with corporate management to bring their concerns to the table. If that doesn’t work, the funds may file a shareholder resolution at an upcoming stockholder meeting. If all efforts fail with a company, it may be taken out of the portfolio. It’s a way to be with companies that believe the same things we do.

The Business of Education

Total spending on education and training in the United States is estimated at about $800 billion, making it the second largest sector of the nation’s economy next to healthcare. According to the U.S. Department of Education, total elementary and secondary education spending is projected to have constituted about $406 billion of that total in the 2000-2001 school year, an increase of about 4 percent over the previous year. It is estimated that about $30 million (7 percent) of these resources are for private schools, while the remaining $375 billion (93 percent) is for public schools.

Education technology spending has been fueled in recent years by the nation’s overall education investment, led by several years of record-level federal increases but also by state and local spending made possible by the strong economy. However, the scale and scope of the state technology funding in the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years will depend largely on the economic and fiscal climate within each state.

The National Conference of State Legislatures reported in November, 2001 that revenue shortfalls and/or expenditures exceeding budgeted amounts has caused at least 36 states to implement or consider mid-year budget cuts or holdbacks to address fiscal problems in FY2002. On the positive side, many such states have either exempted or are considering exempting K-12 education either in whole or in part.

Excerpted from 2002 Education Market Report: K-12

Parents With Developmental Disabilities

By DR. JOEL M. LEVY

Hollywood has finally learned that characters playing the role of people with developmental disabilities don’t have to be seen as misfits. No longer does a character have to encompass virtually every stereotype associated with a particular disability.

Perhaps that explains why so many of us in the field of social services are praising the movie I Am Sam as ground breaking. Here is a rare glimpse into the life of a person with mental retardation, who is shown holding a job, socializing with his friends and contributing to his community.

Sean Penn’s performance as Sam Dawson, a single-parent with mental retardation raising his typically developing daughter Lucy, is com- peling. As Lucy’s cognitive abilities begin to rapidly eclipse those of her father’s, Sam’s life is shattered when authorities try to take Lucy away from him.

Unfortunately, nationwide, there are many parents with developmental and/or learning disabilities who, like Sam, lack the support needed to help keep these families together.

“The assumption that parents with develop- mental disabilities can’t benefit from reunifica- tion services just isn’t true,” said Megan Kish- baum, Ph.D., founder and executive director of Through the Looking Glass, a California-based organization dedicated to helping parents with all types of disabilities raise children. “Based on our experience, it’s a lot better to have

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Beverly Withers: One Woman’s Journey To The Opera

By MARIE HOLMES

Beverly Withers, a soprano in the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, has been making music for as long as she can remember. She began taking piano lessons at the age of 7, and “practicing was always a delight.” Since the piano stood in the family living room, well within everyone’s earshot, a young Withers often had to force her to stop practicing. “I actually remember the day that they had to peel me off the piano bench,” joked Withers. Her love of music soon blossomed into what Withers herself describes as a “driving, relentless urge to sing.”

Withers’ early repertoire included mainly gospel and spiritual songs. “Some of the fond memories I have of my youth are of singing in my church choir,” by the age of 17, Winters was playing the piano and the organ at her church as well as serving as choir director. She was also a “driving, relentless urge to sing.” Her voice “blossomed into what Withers herself describes as a ‘driving, relentless urge to sing.’” By the age of 17, Winters was playing the piano and the organ at her church as well as serving as choir director.

“While the church provided her with certain obstacles, Withers’ early repertoire included mainly gospel and spiritual songs. “Some of the fond memories I have of my youth are of singing in my church choir,” recalls Withers. “He was influential in shaping a student’s voice–‘that fragile and precious gift that God gave them.’” Her advice to young students of music and other subjects, is “to learn as much as you can. Never stop asking questions of those with the knowledge to help you.” With a wealth of community and junior colleges, state schools and scholarship programs, Withers believes that “education is affordable to everyone.” She urges students to “stay in school and find a way to go to college. ‘There is a way for you.” Withers would advise young musicians to join as many musical organizations as possible, to study an instrument such as the piano, and, of course, to find a mentor.

Mike Jarvis: St. John’s Basketball Coach

By M.C. COHEN

Mike Jarvis believes in education. Just listen in on one of his press conferences after a St. John’s basketball game. Win or lose, Jarvis never fails to mention that a basketball arena is just another type of classroom and that an educational experience just took place. “I’m most proud of the fact that I’ve been coaching and teaching since I graduated from college,” said Jarvis, who coached basketball and taught at Cambridge Rindge & Latin High School in Cambridge, Mass. for 17 years. “When I was a high school coach, all of my kids, with the exception of two, went on to higher education; and of those two, one became a policeman and one a fireman and we know how important they are today.”

“I’ve always tried to create the proper balance and teach my kids. Or at least attempt to teach my kids the necessary skills for life,” he said.

Jarvis’ own life lessons began in Cambridge, Mass., where he was born and raised. He attended Cambridge Rindge & Latin and went on to play baseball and basketball at Northeastern University. When he graduated from college in 1968, there were few openings for African-American coaches on the collegiate level at that time. “First of all, the main factor was that I wanted to stay involved in the thing I really loved, and that was sports,” said Jarvis, who went on to become the elected president of the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) at the conclusion of the 1997-98 season. “Once I thought I was going to be a player; then reality struck and I realized I wasn’t so talented. I was going to be a coach. In those days, the only real opportunity an African-American had was coaching high school, so I decided to go back to my high school, where in order to coach, I would have to teach.”

And teach he did. At Cambridge Rindge & Latin he coached his squad to three consecutive state titles (1981, 1988 and 1979) while registering a 77-3 record during that time. It’s no wonder, considering that his star player during those years was Patrick Ewing. Jarvis went on to coach at Boston University and George Washington University before landing the prestigious St. John’s job in the summer of 1998. While with the “Johnnies,” Jarvis has led the team to an elite eight appearance in the 1999 NCAA tournament and a Big East Tournament Championship in 2000. With all the successes that he has achieved, Jarvis, perhaps more than anyone, realizes that young African-American coaches who want to follow in his footsteps will not have it easy.

“My biggest advice [to young African-American coaches] would be that in order to be successful, there are certain skills for life that you have to learn no matter what you do,” said Jarvis. “You have to understand the world we live in, and the world we live in is not run by African-Americans. So you have to learn, number one, what game you’re playing, and then the strategies necessary to play that game. And that means you have to learn those necessary skills for life.”

For Jarvis and his St. John’s players these lessons are an everyday reality. “He understands everyone’s situation,” said senior guard Sharif Fordham. “He takes into account when a person is from. He’s a well-rounded father figure.”

In Memoriam: Clarence G. Robinson, MD

By HERMAN ROSEN, M.D.

I was fortunate to have been closely associated with Dr. Robinson for many years, working with him on many of his endeavors. I recall fondly spending time with him at New York Police Department events at Rodman’s Neck and seeing his delighted face at a surprise 75th birthday party his family planned for him. Dr. Robinson had a smile and a friendly hello for everyone and everyone responded in kind.

Dr. Clarence Robinson was born in Chicago on September 19, 1920, the son of a physician, Clarence, St., and Mary, a teacher in the Chicago Public Schools System. He attended public elementary and high schools and graduated from the University of Chicago. He received a medical degree from Meharry Medical College in 1945, where he met his wife, Dr. Thelma Lennard. Following graduation, they both came to Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn for internships. After their internships, Dr. Lennard, who later became a psychiatrist, withdrew to raise their family, while Dr. Robinson remained and went on to complete residency training in internal medicine. He subsequently opened an office for the practice of medicine in Brooklyn.

There were many “firsts” during his illustrious career. He was the first black physician in Brooklyn to be certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine. Later he became a Fellow of the American College of Physicians. He was the first black to be appointed to the Medical Board of Coney Island Hospital and subsequently was elected president of the body. He was also the first black physician to head a department there, Ambulatory Care Services. In 1973, the hospital dedicated the “Clarence G. Robinson, M.D. Self Te a c h i n g Room” which remains an information source to medical students and physicians at Coney Island Hospital. Dr. Robinson was the second black physician to be appointed as Police Surgeon with the NY Police Department. His predecessor was the renowned Dr. Louis T. Wright, Former Chief of Surgery at Harlem Hospital. Later, Dr. Robinson became Supervising Chief Surgeon of the NYPD, the first on a full-time basis. He devoted much time to police medicine, becoming Chairman of the Police Physicians Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. During his later years, Dr. Robinson served on the Medical Board of the NYC Employees’ Retirement System, eventually becoming its chairman.

Clarence and Thelma, we will always remember you.
INTERVIEW WITH DR. HERBERT PARDES, PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL

By JOAN BAUM, P.R.D.

He seems to know everyone—the operative words are “know” and “everyone”—“know” because Dr. Herbert Pardes has been a distinguished psychiatrist and department head for so long that he’s developed a sure intuitive sense of the staff, faculty, and students he meets, and “everyone” (or just about) because his incredibly extensive résumé indicates a lifetime of contribution to autoimmunity and high-level administrative appointments.

Two years ago, when he became President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York Presbyterian Healthcare System, he assumed one of the most prestigious medical administrative positions in the country—something he’d probably say the country was ready for. To say that merger, which took place five years ago (“a smart move”) when New York Hospital (Weill Medical College of Cornell University) allied itself with Presbyterian Hospital (Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons), has been a success is an understatement. The extraordinary role he plays in advancing biomedical research, comprehensive high-quality education, outstanding clinical care, and community outreach. Two minutes in his company and it becomes clear that the powerhouse union has a powerhouse captain at the helm, professionally skilled and politically savvy.

The energetic CEO talks fast, without missing a beat, unerringly picking up his train of thought after having been called to the phone any number of times. He’s focused, intent, eager to promote the “rare” if not “unique” vision as well as rich training (“a classical pianist here, a writer there”), though he also wants to make sure that the new doctors are also caring individuals. His own mentors, he recalls, were “great teachers,” smart, sensitive to behavior, encouraging, exciting. He notes that he is particularly supportive of the Teacher Education Center at Columbia.

Years at the head of the National Institute of Mental Health and as Assistant Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service show: Pardes is devoted to advancing research. Forty years ago, for example, persons with colon cancer were automatically condemned. Now, because more people are living longer, there is need for accelerated research into treatment, if not cure. There must be national policy so that “jewels” such as New York Presbyterian can continue to shine. He’s concerned about reported impending cuts to schools and hospital, not only for what redactions will mean for medical care but for what they may signal to prospective medical students. Like everyone, doctors want to make a living and be happy, he points out, a reflection that would sound commonplace were it not for the fact that it is followed. Pardes-style, with rapid-fire examples of what makes doctors unhappy: bureaucracy, bureaucracy, bureaucracy, a disease he feels that is responsible for the recent slight but telling drop in medical school applications. He understands the need for con-

WEILL CORNELL

The Immune Deficiency Causing Type 1 Diabetes

MEDICAL COLLEGE ADVANCES

EDITED BY HERMAN ROSEN, M.D.

An article recently published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation by lead authors Drs. Noel Maclaren and Anjili Kukreja of the Department of Pediatrics at Weill Cornell Medical College investigates 60 patients with immune-mediated type 1 diabetes. The study addresses what predisposes to this condition, and the latest measures for diagnosis and therapy. The authors suggest a new strategy for combating the disease rather than suppress the patient’s immune system.

In immune-mediated diabetes, a genetic predisposition in the body’s immune system destroys the pancreatic beta cells that secrete insulin. Type 1 diabetes can also occur, less commonly, without autoimmunity. Insulin therapy is always required in type 1 diabetes, which accounts for about 10 percent of all diabetics.

In all their subjects, the authors found a deficiency in certain kinds of white blood cells, called T regulatory cells, because they regulate the immune system and protect the body from being attacked by its own defenses.

The deficiency is an absolute requirement for immune-mediated diabetes, but not everyone with the deficiency will develop the condition, but may develop other autoimmune diseases, such as thyroiditis, Addison’s disease, vitiligo or multiple sclerosis.

Testing for this defect in T regulatory cells is useful in diagnosing the immune form of type 1 diabetes, and predicting whether a relative might develop it. First, the family member is tested for antibodies to their own islet cells. If the test is positive it indicates that the person is progressing toward diabetes, but not necessarily clinical disease. Then the same test is given to other family members. Finding a deficiency at this time is strongly predictive that type 1 diabetes will occur.

For years, physicians have tried to treat this autoimmune disease by suppressing the immune system, and results have been disappointing. The need for insulin persists and suppression of the immune system predisposes to various infectious and malignant diseases. However, the results of this study suggest a new therapeutic strategy: instead of sup-

pressing the immune system, stimulate a select part of it, the T regulatory cells.

To accomplish this stimulation of T regulatory cells, the authors point to a substance, alpha-galactosylceramide, found in sea sponges near Japan, which has turned out to be such an immunostimulant. Reports of its trials in nonobese diabetic mice have been encouraging say the authors. They suggest human trials of synthetic forms of the stimulant soon.

Dr. Herman Rosen is Clinical Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College.
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has pledged a $500,000 challenge grant over the next three years to help create a $1 million endowment for the Gateways to the Laboratory Program, a joint endeavor of the Tri-Institutional M.D.-Ph.D. Program of Weill Cornell Medical College, The Rockefeller University, and Sloan-Kettering Institute. Gateways is a unique summer internship program which gives college students from underrepresented minority groups, who have completed their freshman or sophomore years with distinction, the opportunity to acquire one or two summers of experience in a leading laboratory.

The goal of Gateways is to provide students who have outstanding potential in the biomedical sciences the opportunity to test and develop their interest in pursuing a combined degree of experience in a leading laboratory. Students perform individual research projects at any one of the three institutions for a 10-week period. The program includes research presentations, seminars, job club, clinical rounds with members of the Department of Medicine at New York Presbyterian Hospital, workshops, career guidance, peer advisors, and mock interviews and MCAT exams.

Since it was established in 1993, as the first minority outreach program of its kind to be hosted by an M.D.-Ph.D. program, Gateways has enrolled 75 undergraduates. Of these, more than half have gone on to M.D., Ph.D., or M.D.-Ph.D. programs. Five Gateways alumni have been enrolled at top M.D.-Ph.D. programs. Twenty-four Gateways alumni are still completing their undergraduate education.

“The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has provided a critical vote of confidence to Gateways to the Laboratory, for which we are extremely honored and grateful,” said Dr. Antonio M. Gotto, Jr., the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medical College. “This gift will create an endowment to sustain the program for years to come, and help us invest in the future of underrepresented minority college students.”

Dr. Ettinger assists student with a processing speed procedure
Teaching the Dream to Preschoolers

By MARGARET BLACHLY

In our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, inclusion classroom of three and four year olds at the Bank Street Family Center, we teach the children from the very beginning that every single one of them is special and unique, and that differences are something to be valued. We also teach them to use their words to negotiate problems and we help them to respect each other's feelings. The classroom is an ideal environment, and we hope to send them into the world with these same values. This year our class was invited to an assembly to celebrate the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. As a team of teachers, we reflected on how to introduce this piece of history and the importance of the work of a great leader to our children. We realized that the children were already familiar with the teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. because they are taught his teachings in the classroom every day.

The history of segregation and the Civil Rights movement is complex, and we needed to present it to the children in a concrete way that they could relate to. We decided that a combination of literature, discussion and song would give the children images, words and key vocabulary to hold onto as they worked through the concepts.

We started off the circle-time by asking the children what they knew about Martin Luther King, Jr. and only a few of them shared any information. We then told the children that Martin Luther King was like a teacher, who spoke to many people, both black people and white people, Latin American, every kind of person, and taught them to stand up and say that the laws were wrong. Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream that all kinds of children would go to school and be friends, and that when people worked together, they were able to change the laws.

As the children absorbed these new ideas, our music teacher taught us the songs we would sing at the assembly. Lyrics of the songs that repeated were “Hold the dream of Martin Luther King...he was a peace loving man...change that law.” At the assembly, parents, teachers and children sang these words together.

One child said that you have to follow rules even when you don’t like them. We had to tell her that most rules are important, for keeping people safe, but that this time the rules were wrong, the laws were unfair. The looks on the children’s faces showed their processing of this information. We then told the children that Martin Luther King was like a teacher, who spoke to many people, both black people and white people, Latin American, every kind of person, and taught them to stand up and say that the laws were wrong. Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream that all kinds of children would go to school and be friends, and that when people worked together, they were able to change the laws.

What is the most rewarding is that weeks later, when they request the Hold the Dream song, we know that they now have a concrete memory of the story they heard and the songs they would create back in their classrooms. Many people were involved with this project, and they all responded enthusiastically and capably. First, I discussed the idea with our Board of Education. They are always willing to provide our students with special opportunities and this was no exception. We agreed to house the museum in exchange for the use of facilities by our students and faculties, and the consultation services. We identified a room we could convert in one of our middle schools, which could serve the space.

Of course, our science department worked on a lesson guide that teachers could use to link the exhibits on display to their own curriculum. We quickly saw that students could use the museum not only to study science, but that the teachers could plan lessons on just any subject.

Our art teachers got involved, and the result is a wall of wonderful drawings of dinosaurs by our middle school students. This month, after about six months of planning and preparation, we celebrated the opening of The Long Island Natural History Museum with a ribbon cutting ceremony. At the ceremony I remarked that it was especially nice to have this museum open in the district at a time where one of our priorities is building a computer/communications network that will provide our students with state-of-the-art technology. It’s still nice to take a break in our museum and imagine a time when dinosaurs inhabited this world.

The first students to visit the museum were kindergartners, and the looks on their faces told it all. Wow! Here were giant skulls and fossils in a school right near their homes. Imagine the drawings they would create back in their classrooms and the stories they would tell their families.

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from the Superintendent’s Seat

The Making Of A Museum

By Dr. Carole G. Hankin with Randi T. Sachs

A number of years ago, children at a Syosset elementary school found what appeared to be animal bones in the schoolyard. They brought them to their teacher and asked how they could find out where they came from. The teacher turned to her principal, who in turn asked her colleagues if anyone could help. An administrator at one of our middle schools said she knew a paleontologist and he might be able to help. He did. Dr. Bryn Mader told us that the bones were from a deer and praised the students for their discovery and curiosity.

Dr. Mader, who teaches at a local college, had been working on his own project for years. He had amassed a collection of prehistoric bones, fossils, and cast replicas and had obtained accreditation to form “The Long Island Natural History Museum.” He asked me if I could help and the idea intrigued me. Could a school district house a museum?

Our district has established partnerships with the finest museums in New York. Our students learn from professionals at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The American Museum of Natural History, and the Museum of Modern Art. These museums are truly institutions of education and the programs that we have designed with them can be modeled by other school districts across the region. Now we had an opportunity to be a part of the beginning of a new museum for Long Island.

One of the many great assets of the Syosset School District is building a computer/communications network that will provide our students with state-of-the-art technology. It’s still nice to take a break in our museum and imagine a time when dinosaurs inhabited this world.

The first students to visit the museum were kindergartners, and the looks on their faces told it all. Wow! Here were giant skulls and fossils in a school right near their homes. Imagine the drawings they would create back in their classrooms and the stories they would tell their families.

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NYG, NY—A local financial planner has been teaching parents in our schools how to reduce the costs of their children’s education. Now smart parents can save tens of thousands of dollars in college costs by following a simple plan that takes advantage of ALL the possible scholarships, grants, low-interest loans and work study programs that your child may qualify for.

A recent article reported that the average cost of a college education today is between $40,000 and $140,000.

This is an extraordinary opportunity to save lots of money! That is why we have made available a FREE report that details this money saving program.

The title of the report is: “9 New Ways to Beat the High Cost of College.” You will learn the techniques that other smart parents have used for years! Call 1-800-899-0725 any time, 24 hours a day for a free copy of the report colleges hope you never see.
In a survey of 7,000 English language students and teachers conducted by Study Saint, the 100 percent free-access englishclub.com, was ranked #1 out of 10 leading ESL sites. [English as a First Language/English as a Second Language] internet sites.

Matthew Ridyard, inventor of the Study Saint internet optimizer for English learners, presented the Golden Halo Award for “Best English Language Site in the World” to englishclub.com founder Josef Euscherger, saying: “englishclub.com has overwhelmingly been voted the Study Saint user’s popular choice. From a total poll of 7,000 votes, englishclub.com was preferred by 28 percent of the voters. A remarkable achievement.”

Founded in 1997 by Josef Euscherger, an English-born writer/photographer and teacher with 10 years’ experience teaching English in Europe and Asia, englishclub.com is a Cambridge, England site that has quickly developed into one of the leading language instruction sites.

“I think of englishclub.com as a real ‘club’ that belongs to the visitors, who can participate online in a friendly environment that encourages ‘learning by doing’,” explains Josef Euscherger, who sees no conflict between free online and conventional language schools and publishers. englishclub.com has 24 main sections covering the four language skills plus grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, as well as interactive areas such as eFriends, Forum and Chat, and special sections for teachers. Its 24-hour HelpDesk is loved by students who ask grammar questions online and receive answers from HelpDesk teachers such as Alan Bunyan in Japan or Sandra Gorostas in Argentina. One of its most popular email services is “7 Secrets for ESL/EFL Students.”

Home Page: http://www.englishclub.com
Survey: http://www.studysaint.com/vote.htm
Besides being the month for Valentine’s Day, President’s Day, Mardi Gras/Carnival and the beginning of Lent, February has also been designated as African-American History Month for the last several years. It seems, though, that many people are not aware to the full extent of the participation of this ethnic group in the history of the United States, especially from the requests I have received over the years at Logos: slave girls who become free, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King.

February Book Reviews

Enjoy the great scholarship of literature available for Black History Month.

POETRY AND SONG: AGES 10 - 12

A vigorous poetic tribune to the Black Church: “Craddle, too, was she for creative fire: where Aretha, Leontyne, Sam, Dinah, Della first found voice...”. Lively words set in bold type with the directness of caricature artwork. The resilience of the African American community is made clear with each rolling verse.

FICTION: AGES 8 THRU 12

With “four little tufts” of corn-rowed hair resembling more of a bird’s nest, Bintou longs for the braids of the older women of her Western African village. Rhythmic sentences and dramatic folk style art accompany this exploration of ethnically defined ideals of personal beauty.

NON-FICTION: AGES 6 THRU 8

A child without schooling, Victorian era Mary Kingsley cared ceaselessly for her invalid mother. When she was only four years old, all her childhood companions, the persevering Kingsley eventually journeys to the unexplored territories of Africa and finds that grant of all continents to be her suitable home forever.

By SELENE S. VASQUEZ

BIOGRAPHY: AGES 8 THRU 12

Martin’s Big Word: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Brenda Rappaport. Illustrated by Bryan Collier. Hyperion, 40 pp. $16.95

With a straightforward and moving style of biographical narration. All the pivotal events in the life of this great leader of the twentieth century are related with breath-taking collage illustrations that inspire a greater depth of feeling for the civil rights movement, the magnificent march on Washington, and King’s incomprehensible assassination.

Special Education Book Review

DEALING WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS

BY MERRI ROSENBERG

Few experiences can be as daunting for a parent as raising a child with a chronic illness. When that ill- ness is hemophilia, the challenge quotient gets bumped up considerably. The specter of a child having potential life-threatening bleeds, figuring out how to allow that child to enjoy childhood’s ordinary moments and milestones, and confronting one’s own anxieties is potentially a minefield fraught with scary missteps.

Fortunately for the relatively few parents who have children with hemophilia, a blood clotting genetic disorder that affects about 17,000 people in the United States, Lauren A. Kelley’s informative and useful book should help them navigate successfully through the process.

As the mother of a hemophiliac son, as well as two younger daughters, Kelley manages to be both reassuring and realistic. She doesn’t shirk from describing, sometimes in painstaking detail, the medical procedures that hemophiliacs endure or how to manage complications that may occur—but she does so in a brisk, chatty tone that conveys the unfailing message that parents don’t have to be afraid, and that they can raise a happy and well-adjusted child. There’s a particularly engaging photo gallery of children with hemophilia, doing everything from karate and baseball to swimming and scooting, as a visual message that hemophilia doesn’t have to prevent a child from living as normal a life as possible.

As Kelley says, “Your child can have solid, healthy self-esteem despite hemophilia—solid enough to handle life’s joys and disappointments.” While Kelley never shortchanges the importance of managing the illness through preventive measures (like removing coffee tables with sharp edges, putting padding around the family fireplace, keeping sharp silverware at the back of the dishwasher, having a child wear a protective helmet when he’s learning to walk, making a child wear a MediAlert bracelet) she is also emphatic about being confident that a child can participate in sports, summer camp and other activities.

What Kelley does particularly well is present her information in a cogent and easily digested form that skillfully combines intimate anecdotes from other parents of hemophiliacs with scientific data and end-of-chapter summaries for quick reference. With its ample appendices listing everything from books and magazines, targeted towards parents and children; web sites; advocacy organizations; hot lines, and even sources of possible college scholarships, the book’s self-help features are clearly spelled out.

Kelley is also quite resourceful about the need for parents to educate themselves about the disease and its treatments so that, in turn, they can be effective advocates for their child, whether dealing with emergency room personnel, school nurses, or even other family members and the parents of their child’s friends.

Especially useful is the chapter on schools, which provides very specific strategies on how a parent can reassure classroom teachers and other school personnel about the needs of a hemophiliac child. Kelley cautions parents to be alert to any signs that a teacher might be over-protective of a hemophiliac student, or in some way sin- gling out that child in a way that might be harmful to his interactions with peers.

Kelley celebrates the role of the school nurse in helping a child with hemophilia thrive in school, and recommends that parents become respectful partners with the school nurse. She also recom- mends that parents do their part by informing school personnel whenever a child has to be absent for an extended period of time because of the illness, and be sure that arrangements are made for tutoring in school work so that the child doesn’t fall too far behind his classmates.

This is a valuable resource for anyone who has a child with hemophilia, or whose professional lives bring them in contact with these children.

Merri Rosenberg is a freelance writer and editor specializing in educational issues.
Movie Based On Pulitzer Prize Book: Newspaper Life In Small Town

By JAN AARON

Must a movie adaptation mirror its literary source? This is a question educators might ask students, suggesting they see these films before reading their books.

Director Lasse Hallstrom’s lovely film, The Shipping News, from a screenplay by Robert Nelson Jacobs, is based on the Pulitzer Prize novel by E. Annie Proulx, has been widely criticized for casting Kevin Spacey as Quoyle, the novel’s fat protagonist. He is convincing, although he doesn’t look like his literary counterpart.

Quoyle’s troubles link to a childhood incident when he nearly drowns after his father throws him off a pier as a way of teaching him to swim. Quoyle still drowns—in his troubled life. He has a dead-end job as a newspaper inksetter; an unfaithful wife (wonderful cameo by Cate Blanchette) who saddles him with a child. His parents commit suicide. When Quoyle’s wife dies, the middle aged loser hits the road with his aunt (a solid Judi Dench) and daughter for a new life in their battered ancestral home in frozen Newfoundland. Hired by a local paper to write the shipping news, he is helped by his eccentric colleagues to sharpen his writing skills, and, with each article, he seems to stand straighter. His growing love for widow Wacey Prowse (a sweet Julianne Moore) also helps Quoyle gather the strength to repair his wounds. (The Shipping News, 111 minutes, released by Miramax, R; Scotland PA, 108 minutes, released by Lot 47 Films, R.Call 777-FILM.)

Most of the time Gooding smiles, falls and slips on the ice and flails his arms, pitching his one memorable sequence, he insists on showing his prowess and rides his team of dogs over a steep ledge onto an extremely thin sheet of ice. For more sophisticated comedy, see Gary Busey’s Rip DownTown, a sleek Canadian prize-winner about a group of young office workers in an interconnected series of office and apartment buildings and food courts who have staked a month’s salary on a bet to see who can stay indoors longest. The movie covers lunch hour day 24 of the wager when everything is falling apart and everyone would pay a price for freedom. (Snow Dogs, 95 minutes, Walt Disney Pictures, PG, mild crude humor: waydowntown, 87 minutes, released by Lot 47 Films, R; call 777-FILM.)

Children of Uganda Perform in New York City

In the wake of terrorist attacks on the United States, a remarkable group of children will travel to the U.S. to share their timely message of triumph over tragedy. Children of Uganda—an award-winning dance troupe of 20 AIDS orphans aged 6-17—will tour the country January through April of 2002 as part of the Kennedy Center’s African Odyssey, including upcoming New York performances at Queens Theater in the Park on Saturday February 23rd and Sunday the 24th. The money raised on tour will go to support nearly 1000 children in Uganda, an East African country where the devastation of AIDS has left 1.7 million children without one or both parents. Children of Uganda won “Best Performers” at the International Children’s Festival in Wolf Trap, was hailed as “first rate” and “inspiring” by The New York Times, and in 2000 performed at The White House and on “The Late Show with David Letterman.” Their performance is a mesmerizing program of historical, social and festival dances, sung in multiple languages with authentic instruments and costumes. Although the children have experienced tragedy, they dance with joy and an inspiring spirit that appeals to audiences of children and adults alike.

For more information go to www.unaids.org
ICE HOCKEY SCHOOL: THE NEW YORK RANGERS ARE CHEERING FOR CHILDREN

By TOM KERTES

The New York Rangers may be struggling a bit as a hockey team, but their commitment to the community in general, and education in particular, is well known and appreciated.

“We want to be known as more than just a bunch of guys who skate fast and body-check hard,” said Rangers star Brian Leetch whose team is in third place in the NHL Eastern Conference. “We want to counter the fighting stereotype, you know the ‘I went to hockey, my nose is in my ass’ stereotypes while acting as a deterrent to the fighting impetus.”

This is where the New York Rangers’ (and a host of other sports stars in order to achieve a multi-faceted) curriculum, said Vogel. The curriculum includes geography lessons, taking advantage of the fact that hockey is the most international of the four major American sports these days—Ranger players hail from Russia, the Czech Republic and many other corners of the universe. The curriculum also includes far-reaching lessons, such as “How to Make a Media Guide,” “How the Body Works,” “How to Merchandise a Sport Franchise,” and, of course, the “Importance of Exercise” and “Basic hockey lessons.”

Art projects and story writing, all involving the New York Rangers, are also an important part of the often interactive, always hands-on, activities.

“The lessons are all student-centered and project-based,” said Vogel. “Though they’re all connected to the regular school curriculum, they are specifically designed to be different, exciting, and fun.”

The curriculum, created by Scholastic, is particularly focused upon strengthening reading and writing skills. “They are the basics,” said Leetch. “And just like in hockey, you can’t possibly win in life without the basics.”

To achieve its goals, Cheering for Children has sent over 1,000 players—superstars Leetch and Mark Messier have been particularly popular—staff members, on-air talent, and famous former stars, such as Rod Gilbert, to schools in Queens for up-close talks, lectures, meetings and, of course, hockey clinics. But, that’s not all the team has gone beyond these basics. The Foundation also established MSG New York Rangers Clubs and funded an educational curriculum that includes an instructional guide and student workbooks. “We tried very hard to build on the students’ basic interest in sports and sports stars in order to achieve a multi-faceted curriculum,” said Vogel.

The idea was to enable children with mental and (some physical) challenges to compete in organized sports just like the rest of us do,” said Neil J. Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York. “The challenge would obviously be so beneficial and enriching to their lives. Yet don’t think for a single minute that bringing to life this obviously wonderful plan was simple or easy.

Johnson added, “You have to see the films of the first Games, which were held at Soldier Field in Chicago…They built an outdoor pool for the swimming events and, at every five feet or so, there was a lifeguard panicking big-time, practically ready to jump. In 1969, people actually thought that persons with mental retardation had no buoyancy, that they couldn’t possibly swim a lick. The common fear was that they’d just sink and drown.”

Of course America, and other countries, have come a long way since—and, in many ways, they have the Special Olympics to thank for that. Today, the Games are a global movement, encompassing 170 countries.

“In many developing countries, there was no recognition of mental retardation at all before the Special Olympics came in,” Johnson said. “They would just say ‘we don’t have any people like that.’ And even here in the U.S. it took some time to realize that these games are not only wonderfully important for the competitors—in the way of acquiring self-esteem, the joys and pride of achievement, socialization, etc.—but to their families as well.”

“You know how Moms and Dads take tremendous pride in their kids’ participating in Little League or excelling in other sports?” Johnson asked. “Well, it’s no different for the families of children with mental retardation. Not one bit.”

He added, “It is a very healing, very important thing. It strengthens families.”

Over 33,000 volunteers help make possible the Special Olympics, which now has both Winter and Summer Games, held at regular Olympic intervals. The objective of the Games, which provide year-round training for competitors, is not victory but participation.

Although medals are awarded, the competitions operate on a “divisining” basis. “Everyone can compete, regardless of ability,” said Johnson. “And the ‘divisining’ concept assures every participant that they’ll compete against others at the same level.”

The Summer Games offer competitions in 22 sports making them a program almost identical to the regular Olympics. “Some of our athletes have really proven their stuff,” said Johnson.

“This last year, two of our young women have actually competed in the Colgate Games (a major track and field competition for ‘regular’ athletes).”

He added, “Then, just last week, we had a golf tournament in Florida and one of our competitors shot a hole-in-one! This would have been a big deal, except a half-hour later another kid shot a hole-in-one. I’m telling you, the PGA Masters Tournament may not have two hole-ins-one in one year... But we did. We surely did.”
his understanding of higher education. “I love then his presentation dovetails neatly with shirt sleeves than an ivory tower academic, punches. “It’s stupid,” he warns. the fiscally conservative Democrat holds no President’s plan to slash education spending, cation, aren’t more widespread. Of the current those on the long-term economic value of edu-
genuinely puzzled that his views, particularly words rolling quickly. “Say you’re not a com-
tive,” says Kerrey, his eyes dancing and his economic welfare of the country are inextrica-
ably intertwined.

“Say you’re not a compassionate conserva-
ve,” says Kerrey, his eyes dancing and his words rolling quickly. “Say you’re not a com-
passionate liberal. You don’t have to be a com-
passionate anything. On a purely economic level, we cannot afford to shortchange edu-
cation. If you’re 50, if you’re 60 years old, you’re going to be depending on young workers for your Social Security and your Medicare—and if we don’t spend more now, they’re going to be earning less.”

There is intensity and passion behind Ker-
rey’s words, but also a hint of impatience that reminds one of Adlai Stevenson: he appears genuinely puzzled that his views, particularly those on the long-term economic value of edu-
cation, aren’t more widespread. Of the current President’s plan to slash education spending, the fiscally conservative Democrat holds no punches. “It’s stupid,” he warns.

If Kerrey sounds more like a politician in shirt sleeves than an ivory tower academic, then his presentation dovetails neatly with his understanding of higher education. “I love higher education,” explains Kerrey. “It’s been at the forefront of my agenda ever since I was a governor working to improve the University of Nebraska system. One cannot underestimate the importance of higher education in building a liberal democracy.”

Kerrey observes that both our political sys-
tem and our market capitalist economic system depend on education for college-age students and also ongoing training for adults. “Our way of government and a market system may be preferable, but it’s not obvious that they’re going to succeed,” he says. “If they do, it’s not accidental; it’s not like oxygen. It’s the result of hard work.

Yet the benefits of achieving those goals transcend even our own national borders. “If we’re trying to persuade the rest of the world to follow our example...in Afghanistan, in the West Bank and Gaza...to make democracy work...then we have to offer leadership and provide inspiration.”

The New School University may be the right forum for Kerrey’s approach to higher edu-
cation. Founded as the New School for Social Research by a group of intellectual notables who broke away from Columbia University in protest against World War I era loyalty oaths, including historian Charles Beard, economist Thorstein Veblen and philosopher John Dewey, the school has historically taken an interest in issues of global social justice. Its five divi-
sions—Eugene Lang College, Actors Studio Drama School, Milano Graduate School, Mannes School of Music and Parsons School of Design—are renowned for their willingness to accommo-
date adult and non-traditional students. And its hallmark philosophy, a blend of inde-
pendent thought and pragmat-
ic liberalism, appear to mesh neatly with Kerrey’s own political leanings. “We don’t want to become a different university,” Kerrey notes. “We want to do what we do and we want to do it better; we don’t want to do what some-
place else does.”

He seems acutely aware that the New School serves as a niche for bright, motivated students in the arts and social sciences who want (or need) a less traditional education than those afforded by Columbia or N.Y.U. Kerrey sounds partly proud-parent and partly knowledgeable historian as he explains how Alvin Johnson built the college in an act of rebellion against the educational establishment. Yet while Kerrey appears wedded to that maverick radicalism, he can’t help adding—like any savvy administrator—that Johnson’s move “was also a tremendously sound business decision.”

Kerrey’s goals for the New School are ambi-
tious, particularly when it comes to integrating technology into the curriculum. Unlike many

Johnny-come-lately college presidents, his cre-
dentials in this area are immaculate: As a sena-
tor, Kerrey served as Co-Chairman of the Con-
gressional web-based Education Committee that championed high-speed internet access for all the nation’s classrooms. The committee’s report gained widespread recognition for warn-
ing that Internet access alone wasn’t enough.
but that the service had to be rapid and complete. Otherwise, the report stated, “those with mere access will be left behind as if they were taught from outdated textbooks.”

Now Kerrey is determined to build the New School into a national leader in distance learning. “This isn’t just about on-line courses,” he is quick to point out. “It’s also about saving administrative costs, about cutting down on data entry. A million dollars saved on administrative costs is like 10 million more in endowment”—funds the university can then use on other educational projects. Kerrey also explains that distance learning is sometimes the tip of the iceberg. At a time when many students in the social sciences attend three or four colleges before earning a degree, distance learning can be the gateway to full-time study. “A woman will sign up for one on-line class while attending another school and soon she’ll be a full-time student,” says Kerrey.

Kerrey’s own career has been far from traditional. He originally trained as a pharmacist at the University of Nebraska, inspired to pursue a career in the sciences by a high school chemistry teacher named Bob Reese. Upon graduation in 1966, he joined the Navy Seals and lost a leg serving in Vietnam; his heroism earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1970. Kerrey returned to Nebraska and built a highly successful chain of health clubs and restaurants. A tremendously popular Democratic governor in a heavily Republican state, he inherited a three percent budget deficit and a deep recession in 1982, and by 1987 he had managed to amass a seven percent surplus. During his 12 years in the Senate, he championed early childhood education and Head Start programs, a strong farm economy and universal health care. Yet Kerrey also has drawn national attention for his abortive 1992 presidential campaign and his 1996 description of President Clinton as an unusually good liar. Although he may be the most intellectually gifted individual to seek the White House since Woodrow Wilson, his sharp mind and brisk speaking style haven’t yet translated into votes at the national level. So at the age of 58, Kerrey has traded in his politician’s pinstripes for a cap and gown.

Kerrey admits that the transition from the Senate to academia didn’t go smoothly. “For the first few months I felt like I was trying to air-condition my house in July with the windows open,” he quips. “Three o’clock on Friday would roll around and I’d be ready to head out to National Airport for the flight back to Nebraska.” Life in the Senate has a rhythm to it, says Kerrey, and there’s a very different feel to running a university. “A CEO can’t be a tyrant,” he explains. “He needs to be humble; he needs to recognize that others have better ideas than he does.”

Yet soon Kerrey is back on course, systematically shredding President Bush’s budgetary priorities. “We have 10 million children receiving criminally substandard educations,” he laments. “We have 15 million children for whom access to health care isn’t an option.” The ex-Senator is both affable and persuasive. Yet Kerrey’s zeal leaves one to wonder whether he will ever be truly content to run a university of 27,000, albeit a highly distinguished one, when he may still have a shot at guiding a nation of 270 million.

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**Bob Kerrey**

continued from prior page

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A New Series on College Deans

ENTERING THE DEAN'S OFFICE:
ALFRED POSAMENTIER, DEAN, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, CCNY

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Entering into Dean Alfred Posamentier’s office, the eye is tantalized by a splendid array of gem-like antique maps, prints and memorabilia of the composer, Richard Wagner, all so closely displayed that one cannot see the color on the wall. Reflections of the dean’s deep interest in music and mathematics abound, reflecting his deep abiding respect for learning and education. Indeed, according to Posamentier, “education reflects what we are, what we want to do and our mission.” His comments are inspiring to his students for they are the ones to go out in the world to teach others.

Now in its 80th year, the School of Education at City College, the first school of education founded in the City University of New York (CUNY) system, is the educational home of over 2500 graduate and undergraduate students aspiring to join the teaching profession. And, most of the school’s graduates offer their services to the urban public school system. In an effort to better equip graduates for the professional world, the school recently completed the re-registration process required by the State of New York, which redesigned its requirements for teacher certification. To meet the new requirements the school had to revamp its own curriculum and standards.

“It forced us to redefine our goals and to conduct a total revaluation of what we do as a school of education,” said Doris Cintron, Chair/Deputy Dean of the School of Education.

The process took two years and encountered several obstacles, which according to Cintron included “Getting a group of people together, validating their ideas, respecting their field, but saying that change has to happen.”

In addition to revamping the curriculum, raising standards and providing students and staff with more support services, Posamentier sought to give the school greater visibility through enhancing publicity and strengthening recruiting efforts. Changes included “the tenor of the place” to give the school “immediate credibility,” limited because only 40 percent of students passed the state LAST exam in 1999 when he was appointed. “The college staff was demoralized because we had the almost the lowest passing percentage of graduates in the state,” Posamentier stated.

His efforts produced results: two years later, scores rose to an 87 percent pass rate. Citing the novel approach to revamping the school, the dean stressed as his goal, “to create from our professional point of view the best teachers we can.” In describing the size of the faculty, Posamentier indicated that it was continuously increasing, indicating “a favorable future that bolstered stability and dedication.” The future also holds remarkable innovations. The faculty has unanimously voted to partition the school into three departments—Language and Literacy, Curriculum and Instruction and Administration, Supervision and Special Education. Other new initiatives include the inauguration of a national, quarterly education journal, The New Educator Journal. This peer review journal will soon be launched.

Other future plans that Dean Posamentier will implement include a center for Science and Math education, which will further enhance its already strong math and science teacher development programs, and builds on CCNY’s strengths in science and engineering.

One of the things we have strived for is to become the leader in CUNY in Science and Math Education,” said Posamentier. “I want especially to use our fine programs for science and math teachers to help the NYC Board of Education solve its shortage of teachers in these areas and to provide direct enrichment for the students in the schools.”

According to Cintron, “We are educators for the city... We have a faculty that really knows and understands urban education,” said Cintron. “We know the needs of inner city schools and student populations and prepare teachers and leaders that will effectively meet all challenges.”

Dean Posamentier introduced Prof. Catherine Fosnot and her innovative work with elementary math teachers. This will definitely warrant a future visit to the halls of academia uptown on Amsterdam Avenue and 135th Street.

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By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

As Marymount Manhattan College’s irrepressible Writing Center Director Lewis Burke Frumkin puts it, Alan Furst, master of espionage and intrigue, has been called the new John Le Carré—not that there’s anything wrong with the old one. In fact, however, though not as well known, as Carré, Furst, a well published journalist and author, to date, of six published novels (there are more, I don’t acknowledge them), has, with the recent paperback issue of his latest book, Kingdom of Shadows, claimed the spotlight with a shining all his own. His books, centering on Central and Eastern European intrigue in the years 1933-44, are to a growing number of napt fans an exciting blend of old-fashioned suspense-cum-romance, and atmospheric, authoritative, researched history. As with all fine fiction, Furst’s tales leave readers well entertained and enlightened. As much can be said of the author, to judge from his appearance at MMC recently as the opening guest in the Book Series of the Best-Selling Authors Series, 2002. He wore him down with wit and grace and charmed and charmed and empowered, all by an easy informality. Furst had just returned from a book tour, the 17th in a two-month period that also included time out for making an Absolute Vodka ad, he whispered, with a delicious sense of conspiracy, making his way to the stage. tartlet. No doubt, but not to know it from the lively talk and generous amount of time he spent with an audience that crowd- aftered him after the nearby reception area. Without notes, but with a controlled casualness, Furst talked about how story ideas come to him—a chance glance at a column on a Tarot card morphs into a working title that revisits in some way the dark and shadowy world of spies and counter- spies. A realization that the Danube extends to Istanbul ignites a new setting (and research). And themes keep emerging as political and moral questions arise in his obsessive reading of early WW II history—why, for example, did Hungary stay out of the war until relatively late? Delighted with his own igno- rance, he pursues answers by way of cynical, sophisticated protagonists. Books for our time, it might be said, resonant as they are of an era of idealism, passion, and emotional values. A time of heroes.

Now in its 12th incarnation, MMC’s Best Selling Authors Series runs once a month at 7:30 in the Theresa Lang Theatre. Introducing the event, MMC President Judson R. Shaver called The Writing Center talks a jewel and said he was thrilled to inaugurate the new series.

On February 6, best-selling novelist Rick Moody (Ice Storm, Purple America, The Ice Storm) will speak. For reservations, call (212) 774-0780.

Question: When was Alan Furst born?

Alan Furst was born on February 2, 1902?

Question 1

"It is not as this mouse should tear this hand for lifting food to it" This passage is from: (a) a book of the Bible (b) a book of Shakespeare.

Question 2

Which poet of the Harlem Renaissance was born on February 2, 1902?

Question 3

Which black American author wrote a novel set in Chicago on Lincoln’s birthday in the 1950’s?

FEBRUARY 2002 • EDUCATION UPDATE • COLLEGES & GRADUATE SCHOOLS

By Chris Rowan

2) Langston Hughes; 3) Richard Wright (the novel: King Lear; Answers: 1) W.E.B. Dubois; 2) Martin Luther King Jr and Rosa Parks (born February 4, 1913) and former slave Frederick Douglass died.

In 1956 (on February 22) Martin Luther King Jr and Rosa Parks (born February 4, 1913) and former slave Frederick Douglass died.

In 1959 black contralto Marian Anderson (born Feb. 27, 1897), was prevented from singing at the Lincoln Memorial by the Daugh- t++

Other Events in World History

In 1950 (on Valentine’s Day) Communist Dictators Joseph Stalin (of the Soviet Union) and Mao Tse-tung (of China) formed a military alliance.

FEBRUARY IN HISTORY

Compiled by Chris Rowan

In 1895 (on February 20) abolitionist writer and editor Frederick Douglass died.
Dear Teachers and Administrators:

On January 1, 2002, the fiscal year for the New York City Board of Education began! It is at this time that budgets and vendors’ lists are formulated and released.

As we enter the new year, we give thanks for all that we have and might have lost. We also reflect on what we hold so dear: the education of our children. This is the time that education dollars are allocated for the best materials, books, equipment and services to enable our students to achieve state standards.

For six years Education Update has been regarded as an expert and reliable source of information to help our readers, the decision makers in education, choose appropriate materials for their needs. Education Update is therefore providing the Marketing Supplement, sponsored this month by PC TableTote.

We would like to submit these innovative products and services for your consideration, as well as the visionary companies that offer them.

Best Wishes for an Academically Successful New Year,

Pola Rosen, Ed.D.
Publisher

Product Profile: PC TableTote

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Blame it on the new millennium, future shock, or just successful marketing, the reigning concept in education procurement today is “technology.” While some might argue about the ultimate utility of our current spate of technical acquisitiveness, the only thing no one seems to be able to do is ignore it. With massive initiatives like the New York Board of Education’s experiments in distributing laptops to the 4th grade students of districts 6 and 10 already in play, our administrators intent to bridge the “digital divide” has never been clearer.

Unfortunately, since public education is predominantly funded on the basis of local property values, schools in lower-income districts, which need the access most, also have the least space in which to house it. Spending vast amounts of money on hardware does little good if it can’t be used, so a major battle in the war to equalize opportunity is being fought in the effort to optimize space. One solution that deserves serious consideration is the PC TableTote.

Robert Scott, marketing manager for The Gibbs Group, tells the story of the product’s inventor, a bona-fide traveling salesman, who discovered that his supposedly “portable” computer was next to impossible to use within the confines of a typical airport’s waiting area.

To maximize his ability to sell one product, he created another. Doug Gibbs, the principal design engineer, combined a polycarbonate desktop with telescoping leg assemblies made from aircraft-grade aluminum into a compact, portable folding workstation. His implementation was so effective that freestanding the product can support either desktop and laptop computers or AV equipment, while still maintaining a form factor capable of fitting into a 10 3/4” by 12” case, when folded. A typical classroom closet can easily contain a stack of thirty of forty of the units.

Even better, with its adjustable, collapsible design, the TableTote workstation can quickly be configured without tools to accommodate heights from 13 to 30 inches—covering dimensions appropriate for students from grade school to higher education. At a net weight of about three pounds, it comes with standard safety features like non-skid rubber feet and desktop areas—something which certainly cannot be said about the “legacy furniture” now in use in most classrooms.

The company offers a series of progressive discounts for institutional buyers: Education Update’s administrative readers mentioning this article will receive an initial 15% off the suggested manufacturer’s retail price of $49.95, with even further savings on high-volume orders. Furthermore, the company provides significant customization options for interested schools, like unique colors and name imprinting.

Readers on the West Coast are invited to check it out themselves at the Canoes trade expo, being held at the Los Angeles Convention Center from the 20th through the 24th of February. For those that can’t make it, more information on this state-of-the-art functional design concept can be found on the company’s website at www.pctabletote.com, or by contacting Robert Scott or Doug Gibbs directly at 877-318-2253.

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Product Profile: PC TableTote

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TEACHERS COLLEGE ANNOUNCES 2001 ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

Each year Teachers College in New York City honors its distinguished alumni. The following individuals were honored recently for their outstanding contributions to society.

Dr. Betty L. Sullivan, co-founder of Use The News Foundation and its affiliate, Sullivan Communications, Inc., in San Francisco. Dr. Sullivan received an Ed.D. in 1984 and an Ed.D. in 1991 from the Department of Languages, Literature and Social Studies of the College. Additionally, she holds undergraduate and masters degrees from the University of Mississippi.

Dr. Darlene Yee, a Professor of Gerontology in the College of Health and Human Services at San Francisco State University. In addition to her professorship, Yee is Coordinator of Long-Term Care Administration and Director of the Health, Mobility and Safety Laboratory. She is interested in gerontological health education, long-term care administration, and safety research and education.

Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, who received an Ed.D. in Child Development and Guidance from Teachers College, Columbia University in 1957, is the John M. Musser Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Yale University and the Richard March Hoe Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Education at Teachers College.

While at Teachers College he was Chairman of the Department of Guidance, Trustee of the College Entrance Examination Board, Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse in the Education of the Disadvantaged, and Director of the Institute on Urban and Minority Education.

He also returned to Teachers College in September 2000 to act as Interim Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Parent with Disabilities

continued from page 19

prevention and support services in place, so no one ever has to get involved with child protection agencies. Reunification services can be very effective."* According to Through the Looking Glass, 430,257 people with mental retardation or other developmental disability have children. That represents nearly 28 percent of all people who have a developmental disability.

Lula is a 46-year-old mother with a learning disability, raising her eight-year-old son alone. She was so impressed with I Am Sam that she encouraged all her colleagues at work to see it.

"This is something more people should see because then they’ll learn that people with disabilities have needs and desires," Lula said.

“They can provide love. And when you’re raising a child, you need to have love and support.” Lula is one of the lucky ones who is receiving support. As a member of YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities’ Parents with Special Needs Program, Lula can get help by calling her parent counselor. If she feels frustrated, she attends the program's parents support group.

Lula’s face it, parenting, at best, is a challenge. And every new parent, regardless of ability, needs support—be it the help of a neighbor, family member, a “how-to” book, or social service agency. As the movie I Am Sam points out, being a loving parent has little to do with educational diplomas, bank accounts, or job titles. Michelle Pfeiffer, who plays the role of Rita, Sam’s pro-bono attorney, has all the trappings of affluence and success but exorcises little time to sit down and just “be” with her son. Sam is a bus boy for Starbucks. His job in no way appears to compensate the quality time that he spends with his daughter, Lucy.

And, what we have found is that a parent’s love for his or her child provides a powerful motivation for learning skills. Many parenting skills can be taught, coached, and modeled over time. And where they can’t be learned, the skills may need to be supplemented by other supports, including: in-home supports; financial; health supports; transportation assistance; and, work assistance.

The key to the success of YAI’s Parents with Special Needs Program is the parent’s desire to improve his or her skills. The in-home training is tailored to the individual. It is my hope that I Am Sam prompts every state funder for social services to see that parents with special needs require the kind of supports that will offer practically helpful aid and an ear to listen. The bottom line to the story of Sam and Lucy is that no loving parent and child should be separated because social services are not available.*

Joel M. Levy, D.S.W., is Chief Executive Officer of YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities.

Brooklyn Events for Students

District 21, Brooklyn, Juvenile Diabetes Seminar for junior high school students. Held at Coney Island Hospital, 10th floor lounge, 2601 Ocean Parkway. Feb. 18th, 9-3.


Pataki’s Budget Would Cut $25M from City Schools

By STEVEN SANDERS

Governor Pataki’s latest budget proposal for State aid to education occurred almost on the one-year anniversary of Supreme Court Justice DeGrasse’s historic decision that declared the State’s funding formula to be both unconstitutional and inadequate to provide necessary education resources to New York City.

The Governor could have taken the opportunity to propose a revamping of State education aid or to propose additional funding to address the critical shortages in resources for high need school districts. The Governor did neither.

Instead, the Governor merely proposed block granting most of last year’s aid into fewer aid categories and refused to provide any meaningful increase in funding in the statewide aggregate total. For New York City schools, the news is even worse.

The Governor’s budget proposal for the coming fiscal year once again shortchanges New York City’s public schools, actually cutting school aid by approximately $25 million.

As chairman of the Education Committee, working with the Speaker and my colleagues, I will remain steadfast to restore these cuts and to fight for appropriate funding for our students. We simply cannot go backwards, especially with tougher academic standards and a more rigorous curriculum at all grade levels.

Last year, the Assembly passed a budget resolution that contained a landmark two-year plan to ensure that schools would have the resources they need and the ability to plan for the future. It would have increased State funding to our schools by $3.4 billion over two years, and it would have given schools the ability to do appropriate strategic planning for our children’s education that is just not feasible in a climate of perpetual uncertainty.

But the Governor’s refusal to negotiate with the Legislature forced the adoption of a budget in August that cut $1.1 billion from what schools were scheduled to receive under present law.

Governor Pataki’s latest proposal of State education aid in the amount of $14.2 billion provides no additional resources to help schools meet the demands of new academic standards or to address problems from overcrowding to attracting and retaining qualified, certified, quality teachers.

The Governor’s education proposal also reneges promises to fund critically needed early childhood programs contained in the Assembly’s innovative and effective LADDER program. Since 1998, LADDER has helped schools reduce class sizes, improve teacher training, establish universal pre-kindergarten, provide full-day kindergarten programs and modernize computer technology.

There are virtually no credible critics of the current levels of funding who would claim that the resources have run out and that it is time to consider the future. Indeed, with each new proposal by the Governor, the challenges become even more clear.

Steven Sanders is Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee. He can be reached at (212) 979-9966 or by e-mail at sanders@assembly.state.ny.us.
The New Town Day Camp, for children ages 2-6 years, is located at Community School 344 14th Street. The camp provides outdoor activities including rooftop playground and sprinkler time, and indoor fun with music, arts & crafts and drama. Field trips to The NY Aquarium, C.P. Zoo, and other interesting places play an integral part in the camp program. Call 212-780-0080 Ext. 241. The New Town Day Camp, for children ages 5-11 years, is located at the Henry Kaufman Campgrounds in Staten Island. The camp grounds are two miles inland, amidst fields, and hiking and nature trails. Call 212-780-2000, Ext. 357. The New Town Day Camps are located at the Educational Alliance, 197 E. Broadway. Both camps are for children ages 2-6 years and provide substitute/professor, art activities, dramatic play, music, baseball, pool, picnics, and more. Torah Tots features strong emphasis on Jewish practices. Call 212-782-2000 Ext. 212.

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CONCERT—Carsten Schmidt to Perform Works for Piano and Harpsicord. For more information please call (914) 395-0765.

CONCERT—Sarah Lawrence College Alumnae/i Prose Writers Read from Modern Shakespeare, 46 Reisinger Concert Hall 4 p.m. $10 Regular/$8 Senior citizens. For more information please call (914) 395-2451.

CONCERT—Reisinger Concert Hall 4:30 p.m. $6. 112th St. & Bway; (212) 678-1654

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SOL GOLMAN Y/WHA of the Educational Alliance, 344 14th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003

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The Smith School (212) 670-6554

The Smith School, a fully accredited Regents registered independent school for grades 3–12, located on the Upper East Side. Our staff’s experience in teaching students with such problems as Attention Disorders, Dyslexia, Procedural and emotional issues. If your child needs an academic setting, extra attention, close monitoring and extreme small classes The Smith School at 670-6554 because BETTER GRADES BEGIN HERE.

The Sterling School, 718-625-3002

Brooklyn’s private elementary school for Dyslexic children offers a rigorous curriculum, Otis- Gillingham methodology and hands-on multi-sensory learning. One-on-one remediation is also provided. If your bright Language Learning Disabled child could benefit from our program please do not hesitate to contact Director Ruth Alpern at 718-625-4502.

WINDSOR SCHOOL

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